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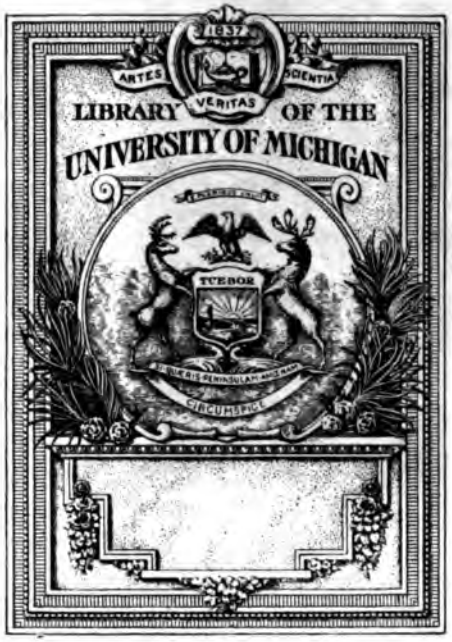
HATTIE PLUM WILLIAMS

A THESIS

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE COLLEGE IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND SOCIOLOGY

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA
1916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A SOCIAL STUDY OF THE RUSSIAN GERM/

BY

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Hattie Plum Williams

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A SOCIAL STUDY OF THE RUSSIAN GERMAN

BY HATTIE PLUM WILLIAMS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

For several years the writer has been engaged in a sociological study of the Russian German community in Lincoln, Nebraska, the results of which will be published ultimately under the title, *The Czar's Germans: a Study of an Immigrant Group in the Midwest.* An understanding of the sociological problems presented has made necessary an extensive historical survey of these people.

The subjects of this study come from the two Volga provinces of Saratow and Samara, located in the southeastern part of European Russia. Their ancestors emigrated thither from various parts of Germany, particularly the southern states, in response to the manifesto of Katherine the Great in 1763. They are a part of the same stream of emigration from Germany which brought the Pennsylvania "Dutch" to the American colonies and which, after the middle of the eighteenth century, was diverted for some years into various European countries.

The Volga "colonists," as they have been called in Russia, have lived, during the past one hundred and fifty years, in their exclusively German villages, retaining their own language, customs, and religion. They have been influenced but slightly by the life about them, and untouched entirely by the great forward movements in the world at large. This is due to the facts that they did not consider the Russian civilization worth emulating, and that they were cut off from the world at large, and from their

German brethren in particular, by lack of facilities for com munication and transportation.

After the freeing of the serfs in Russia in 1861, the variou reforms which followed affected the status of the Germa "colonists." They had gone to Russia under promise that the should have local self-government, retain their own schools an churches, and be free from military service. Now their loca self-government was gradually being interfered with, universa military service forced them into the army, and the fear aros that they would in time be denied their German schools an freedom of worship.

Emigration began in the seventies, some going to Soutl America, others to Canada, and large numbers coming to th United States. The latter settled mainly in Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas, all of which at that time were bidding fo immigrants. Lincoln was then the distributing center for Ne braska settlers, and has since remained the clearing house for thi particular immigrant group. Several thousand Russian German now live in Lincoln, forming the largest group of these people t be found in any one city in the United States.

The writer will later make acknowledgment of aid rendered he by many persons, both in the community studied and outsid its ranks. She wishes to make grateful recognition at this tim of the assistance of Mrs. Henry Heft and family, of Mr. J. J Stroh in connection with the census of the Lincoln community i 1914, and of Dr. H. P. Wekesser, who read the manuscript of th following pages and gave the benefit of his criticism. Thank are due to Professor George Elliott Howard under whose direc tion this study has been pursued, and to the writer's husband Thomas F. A. Williams, without whose encouragement, sugges tion, and criticism the work would not have been possible.

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CHAPTER I

The Population

The history of Russian German immigration to the United States reveals the fact that it has been essentially a movement to the western part of this country and hence to the rural districts. In this respect it differs from much of the present-day immigration which tends to congest in the east, particularly in the large cities. For a study of this nationality, no place in the country offers a better field than does Lincoln, Nebraska, a city of some 48,000 inhabitants, of whom one seventh are Russian Germans. In addition to forming a large proportion of the population, they are a rapidly increasing element in it. In 1914 one third of all the births in the city were of Russian German parentage, while in the preceding year, the total of such foreigners entering Lincoln direct from Russia equalled one and one half per cent. of the entire population of the city.

The location of Lincoln is an added factor which makes it a favorable place for a study of Russian German immigration, situated as it is in the heart of the territory where the greatest number of this group has settled. In the earliest days of the city, it was a distributing point for all immigration to Nebraska, both native and foreign, and small numbers of the first Russian German settlers in the state may still be found in the city. In later years it became the clearing house for a large percentage of the immigration of this nationality to the west; and many of these people have been ticketed direct from Saratow to Lincoln via New York, knowing nothing of any other places in America than these two. After a few years' residence in Lincoln, during which they go to the beetfields each summer, some of them save enough money to start farming, either on rented land in the county or in the vicinity of the beetfields, chiefly in western Nebraska, Colorado, and Montana. Others move to small towns near these regions where they may be close to their work, or out

to the Pacific coast. Aside from this shifting population there i a large stable nucleus connected with the business and industri life of the city, and this is being constantly increased as the peopl rise in the social scale and leave vacant places in unskilled labo for the raw immigrant to fill. Thus Lincoln, on account of it location, furnishes every type of Russian German from th wealthy lumber merchant who came among the first immigrant a generation ago to the most recent arrival from Russia who eke out a scanty living at street sweeping or at work on the railroa section.

Moreover, Lincoln furnishes an example of the influence of semi-rural environment upon an immigrant group, a phase of th subject which is seldom treated. Conditions are a cross betwee city and country, the immigrants being segregated, as in the urba communities of the east, and subject to the political exploitatio and the municipal neglect common to great cities. In the forma tion of educational and political ideals, the influence of Lincol differs materially from the influence of the country districts i Nebraska where the Russian Germans live; while in industry i partakes more of the nature of a rural locality. On first though the circumstances under which the immigant lives in such a com munity as Lincoln would be pronounced ideal, but in spite of th possibilities which it offers, the relation which exists between th city and its "foreign colonies" is much the same as in the large cities, and reproduces their immigrant "problem" in miniature

At every period in American history there has been an immi grant group which has been at the bottom of the social scale. I the colonies, it was the Germans who were feared, despised, an ridiculed. The officials of Pennsylvania were apprehensive les the government should fall into the hands of these aliens whor Benjamin Franklin is said to have described as "rude boors" an whom the people nicknamed "Dutch." Later, the Irish enjoye the same prominence, but they are now displaced by the Italian and the Russian Jews. Every community, too, has its foreig outcasts, and those who are accounted aristocrats in one section o the country are anathematized in another. For example, i Pennsylvania where there are so many Slav races congregated a

present, the Bohemian is a patrician, while in Nebraska, where he is practically the only Slav group, he is considered decidedly plebeian. In the west, another nationality denominated "Russian" occupies the lowest seat in the localities where he has settled, for usually the immigrants of northwest Europe are his only competitors, and he is made to suffer in comparison with them. These local opinions are significant, not because they are well-founded or just, but because they explain in a large degree the relations which exist between these immigrants and the communities in which they live.

In Lincoln the same ignorance, prejudice, and misunderstanding obtain concerning the Russian Germans which invariably exist in American cities having foreign colonies and which too often characterize the attitude of the average American toward the immigrant in general. Many people who have lived in the city for years are ignorant of the fact that the mother tongue of these foreigners is German instead of Russian. Not infrequently some well-meaning citizen suggests that a pamphlet, or address, or bulletin be printed in the Russian language and distributed among the people down in the foreign settlements so that they may get the benefit of it, all unconscious of the fact that not one in a hundred of these persons can understand, speak, or read the Russian language. Others are ignorant of the real character of the people, judging the whole group by the conduct of the few individuals who have a police record. Hence they "would be afraid to go through the settlements alone even in the day time," and they warn anyone who intends to go that they "must be on their guard, for those people carry knives." Even citizens of long residence, ordinarily well informed, are "surprised" at the ability of the children at school, at the neat appearance of the homes, and at everything else commendable which they see on their first visit to the settlements.

A deep-grained prejudice very often exists against these so-called "Russians." Teachers who are sent into these districts resent the assignment, as a rule, and regard it as exile. Certain business men inform you that "they would as soon see the Chinese come here as those people," while others refuse to employ them

because "they are clannish and quarrelsome and Americans can get along with them." Even social workers sometimes go int the settlements looking for bad conditions, and they invariabl find just what they are looking for—but nothing else. When Russian German rises out of the ranks of the street sweepers, h is recognized as a "German," while the "Russian" remains th lowest type of laborer and the most hopeless political factor in th city. These misunderstandings persist year after year in a cit so small as Lincoln, and with a foreign group where the barri between the immigrant and the native is so slight as here exist They account in part for the fact that the Russsian German is a immigrant problem to the city and that the city is a problem to th immigrant.

I. *Composition According to Place of Birth*

The Russian German population of Lincoln is composed almo entirely of immigrants from the Volga provinces of Saratow an Samara. It will be recalled that there are several groups of Ge mans in Russia, each with individual characteristics accentuate by long residence and isolation in a foreign land. The Balt Germans, exclusive and aristocratic, have furnished little emigr tion to America and the few who have lived in Lincoln hav belonged to the educated and professional classes. The Germa from South Russia, popularly known as the "Odessers," hav settled more largely in the farming districts of the west. The are in Lincoln but nine persons born near the Black Sea an these all came in the early immigration of thirty or forty yea ago. Seldom does one of this group come to Lincoln now, an none live within the border of the settlements. The Volga Ge mans include both Catholic and Protestant, and of the form there are in the city only six families, aggregating twenty-nin people. Aside from a small scattering of persons from oth parts of Russia, the remainder of the 6,500 Russian Germans Lincoln are Protestants direct from the Volga, known amon their countrymen as "Volgers." In one sense they form a d cidedly homogeneous group which emphasizes their "conscio

ness of kind" and sets them off from not only the American, but even the Empire German, element of the population.

However an intimate acquaintance with the Russian Germans reveals a number of types as varied as the immediate localities from which they have come; and different customs, ideals, and characteristics are easily accounted for in this way. The more isolated a community and the less intercourse it has had with neighbors of its own blood and with the outside world, the more accentuated and crystallized its peculiarities become. This has been the experience in the Volga colonies, those living within the same village developing constantly closer ties until they have become as one large family, while all the time the lines between them and the other German colonies have become more sharply defined. No one is so sensitive to these differences as are the Russian Germans themselves. They can tell from each person's dialect the colony to which he belongs; and furthermore, they profess to know certain characteristics of the people coming from each village.[1] This fact must be recognized in a thorough understanding of this group, and therefore a further analysis of the source of emigration is essential.

As has been seen, the two governments of Saratow and Samara, in which are located 181 German colonies, furnish the bulk of the immigrants to Lincoln.[2] Of the foreign-born Russian Germans in the city, seventy-six per cent. are natives of Saratow; eighteen

[1] They often connect nicknames with these characteristics and attach a story to explain their origin. For example, the inhabitants of the colony of Doenhoff are called "Geelbaa'n" (Gelb bein), meaning "Yellowlegs." They are an exceedingly active and busy type of people, as is indicated by the fact that they are the most well-to-do of all the German colonists. Their neighbors tell the story that a villager going to market was once asked by a neighbor woman to take a basket of eggs to sell for her. He accepted the charge, and others then besieged him until his wagon box was filled to the top. But the villagers were still not all accommodated, and not content with what he had already done, the obliging and bustling Doenhoffer jumped upon the load and began trampling down the eggs to make room for more. Hence the name "Geelbaa'n," which in the minds of the German colonists characterizes their countrymen of Doenhoff.

[2] Of these villages, 131 are Protestant, 39 are Catholic, 10 are Mennonite, and 1 is Moravian.

per cent. of Samara; and six per cent. of other governments i Russia or of other countries. The distribution of the immigrant between these two provinces is further shown in the following:

TABLE I. DISTRIBUTION OF RUSSIAN GERMANS BY PROVINCES AND BY COLONIES

Number of Colonies Furnishing Immigrants		Number of Immigrants Each
Saratow	Samara	
5	1	200–600
2		100–200
4	2	50–100
6	2	25–50
20	38	1–25

The Germans in Samara engage entirely in agriculture, whil those in Saratow devote themselves partly to manufactures; bu this variation is not reflected in the settlement in Lincoln, as non of its inhabitants follow the occupations which they carried o in their former homes. But these groupings manifest them selves in various ways in the social and religious life of th people, as we shall see in detail later. Aside from peculiaritie in dialect and customs, and numerous differences in folklore they are the basis of local pride and prejudice which break out i petty quarrels often carried into the courts, and in "weddin riots" which sometimes occur during the season of thes festivities.

In addition to the immigrants who come direct from the Ger man colonies of the Volga, many coming from other parts of th Empire are traceable originally to that region. A few of thes are natives of near-by Russian villages where their parents ha gone for work, while others were born on neighboring estate where the father was employed as foreman of a mill or in som similar capacity. A larger number come from the cities of th government Saratow—some from Zaritzyn, but most from th city of Saratow where they have been engaged in various manu facturing pursuits.

Outside the Volga provinces, the Caucasus furnishes the larges number. They come from the German colonies near Tiflis

Stavropol, Vladikavkaz, Novorossiisk, and Yelizavetpol, and from the city of Baku. Astrachan and Orenburg in the east of Russia contribute a few, as does Riga in the Baltic Provinces. Several cities in western Russia, which send a large number of Jews to the United States, are represented. Polotsk, the home of Mary Antin,[1] is credited with three natives; while Kiev, Zhitomir, Novgorod Volynsk, and Warsaw each furnish one. Some of these are due to marriages which Russian Germans contracted while stationed at these cities on garrison duty; or probably in some cases as a result of acquaintanceships formed at the emigrant stations on the way to America. There are a few immigrants in Lincoln who were born in Siberia where the Volga Germans have gone in great numbers during recent years, under contract with the government which has been settling large tracts of land there. These were dissatisfied with the conditions they found, and since they had forfeited their place in their village by emigrating, friends have helped them to America. A few of the Russian Germans in Lincoln were born in South America, chiefly Buenos Ayres, where large settlements of their people have been located since the German colonists first began leaving Russia in 1871. In some instances these are people who were refused entrance at Ellis Island on account of trachoma, and who then went to South America where the exclusion acts are not so strict. After a few years there, they apply again for admission to the United States, and are accepted. The last group of foreign-born Russian Germans includes those born on the way to America. Libau, the port of embarkation for much of the present emigration from Russia, is the native place of five; Liverpool, of one; Germany, of one; Quebec, of one; while five were born at sea. Several born at New York and Boston are really included within this latter group.[4]

[3] Mary Antin, *The Promised Land*, Chapter I.

[4] A further analysis of the source of emigration of the Russian Germans in Lincoln is interesting though not of any especial social significance. The following table gives the total number of Russian born Germans according to provinces and villages:

The first Russian Germans known to have settled in Lincoln

Government Saratow

German Colonies:

Norka	633
Frank	371
Balzer	352
Beideck	292
Huck	253
Walter	196
Schilling	154
Kauz	90
Franker Chutor	68
Kolb	66
Dietel	60
Doenhoff	45
Walter Chutor	44
Moor	39
Hussenbach	37
Grimm	32
Anton	31
Neu Messer	14
Lauwe	13
Messer	12
Bauer	11
Dobrinka	10
Kutter	9
Sarepta (Moravian)	4
Hiltmann (Catholic)	4
Stephan	4
Pobotschnaja	3
Goebel (Catholic)	3
Schwab	3
Kratzke	3
Dreispitz	3
Marienfeld (Catholic)	2
Merkel	2
Kraft	2
Franzosen	2
Holstein	1
Tscherbakofka	1

Russian Villages:

Balanda	9
Rybushka	6
Nikolajewka	3
Balashov	2
Shirokaja	2
Achmat	1
Ryudnya	1
Demetrievka	1
Unknown	10

Estates:

Fahrenbruch Chutor	4
Ust Loba	3
Molans Chutor	2
Trekovka Chutor	1

Russian Cities:

Saratow	58
Zaritzyn	14
Atkarsk	1

Government Samara

German Colonies:

Kukkus	243
Laub	94
Warenburg	81
Stahl	40
Jost	38
Wiesenmueller	24
Brunnental	19
Katherinenstadt	17
Schwed	15
Reinwald	3
Raskaty (Catholic)	3
Strassburg	2
Gnadendorf	2
Marienthal (Catholic)	2
Neu Hussenbach	1
Gnadentau	1
Herzog (Catholic)	1
Schaefer	1
Neu Schilling	1

came in 1876.[5] During the following decade many passed through to join friends in the rural districts of Nebraska, Kansas, or the Dakota Territory and some took up their residence in the city. By 1889 the number of these foreigners was sufficiently large to show initial signs of differentiation from the rest of the community by the organization of a church of 18 families representing 100 individuals.[6] Since the time of the formation of this

Dinkel	13
Eckheim	10
Bangert	8
Gnadenfeld	7
Friedenfeld	7
Rosenfeld	5
Krasnojar	5
Morgentau	5
Straub	5
Urbach	5
Enders	4
Alt Kana	3
Rosenheim	3
Langenfeld	3
Meinhardt	1
Neu Laub	1
Borgard	1
Schulz	1
Neu Marienthal (Catholic)	1
Semenovka (Catholic)	1
Schoendorf	1
Fresental	1
Orlow (Mennonite)	1
Hahnsau (Mennonite)	1
Russian Villages:	
Kosakenstadt	3

The Caucasus	
Government Stavropol	39
Government Baku, Baku	10
Government Tiflis	6
Government Terek	3
Government Kuban	3
Government Yelizavetpol	2

West Russia	
Vitebsk, Polotsk	3
Smolensk, Krasny	1
Poland, Warsaw	1
Volhynia, Novgorod Volynsk	1
Zhitomir	1
Kiev, Kiev	1

Siberia	
Government Tobolsk	2
Government Akmolinsk	1
Government Omsk	1
Astrachan (City)	1
Orenburg (City)	5

Baltic Provinces	
Courland, Libau	5
Livonia, Riga	1

South Russia	
Cherson	7
Bessarabia	2

[5] Cf. *Naturalization Records of District Court of Lancaster County.*

[6] The church records have not been found, and these figures are estimates by some of the charter members.

nucleus, increasingly large and frequent groups of Russian Ge mans have been added. This length of residence together wit the facts that the immigration has always been a family mov ment, and that a large birth rate prevails with this nationalit accounts for the great numbers of native born Russian Germar in Lincoln. Out of 5,985 persons whose birth place was give 36.3 per cent. were born in the United States and 63.0 per cen in Russia.[7] A very small number of the native born are hea of families and thus furnish an opportunity to mark the effect c American environment upon the second generation born her The majority of the native born, however, are children an young people under age. Of the native-born children of Russia German parents, 80 per cent. are natives of Lincoln, showing ho largely this city has been the distributing point for this nationalit

It has been pointed out frequently that the Russian Germa immigration to America is a family movement. This is true, n merely in the sense of the individual family consisting of paren and children, but in the larger sense of the undivided or patr archal family as it exists in the German colonies in Russia. It a common saying that everybody in the Lincoln settlements related to everyone else. A child, in response to the question ho many of her family came when she did, said, "A whole ship-load. Relationships are recognized to a much more extended degr than with us, and second or third cousins, or relatives by marriag with the relatives thereby acquired, are counted as a part of one "family."[8] Endogamy, practiced for a century and a half, ha literally made the inhabitants of each village one large famil and when immigration from any one colony begins, it means tha a large number of "relatives" will surely follow from that plac Thus six colonies have furnished 60 per cent. of the 3,772 foreig born Russian Germans in Lincoln, while the remaining 40 p

[7] All statistics relating to the Russian German settlements are take from or based upon the private census taken in March–April, 1914, unle otherwise stated.

[8] The Russian Germans use the word "freund" as a generic term t mean relative, including all degrees except those represented in the imm diate family.

cent. is scattered among 124 different places. This immigration has not resulted from solicitation by steamship companies or advertising literature, but almost universally from the encouragement of relatives who preceded the immigrant to America. There has been not only the assurance of work and of comfortable living conditions, but the receipt from relatives of steamship tickets, the money for which is repaid out of the first earnings of the family after reaching America. Fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews, cousins and second cousins, and all of their relatives in turn are thus brought to the "land of the free."

Technically speaking, Russian Germans therefore fall under the head of "assisted" immigrants, *i. e.*, aliens who come on tickets bought in this country and sent to them. Such foreigners are ordinarily considered an undesirable class and their admission is prohibited when they are assisted by a corporation, association, society, municipality, or foreign government. But a distinction is made between such aliens and those whose fares are paid by relatives or friends, although the government still considers the practice unfortunate and not calculated to secure the best results. In 1913, 32 per cent. of all the aliens entering the United States were prepaids, and from 1910 to 1912 the proportion ranged from 25 to 36 per cent.[9] Of the Russian-born Germans living in Lincoln in 1914, however, 65 per cent. had come on prepaid tickets and only 35 per cent. had paid their own passage. In spite of the unfavorable circumstances suggested by these statistics, experience with the Russian Germans in Lincoln, who for twenty-five years have come "assisted," shows that there is no relation between the desirableness or the undesirableness of these immigrants and the fact that their passage is paid for them.

Indeed it does not always indicate even their financial condition. Not infrequently a young married man of a well-to-do family wishes to emigrate, but his father objects and refuses not only to give him his portion of the family possessions but even to

[9] *Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration*, 1913, 18. Cf. also, "Emigration Conditions in Europe" in *Report of Immigration Commission of 1907*, IV, 59–61.

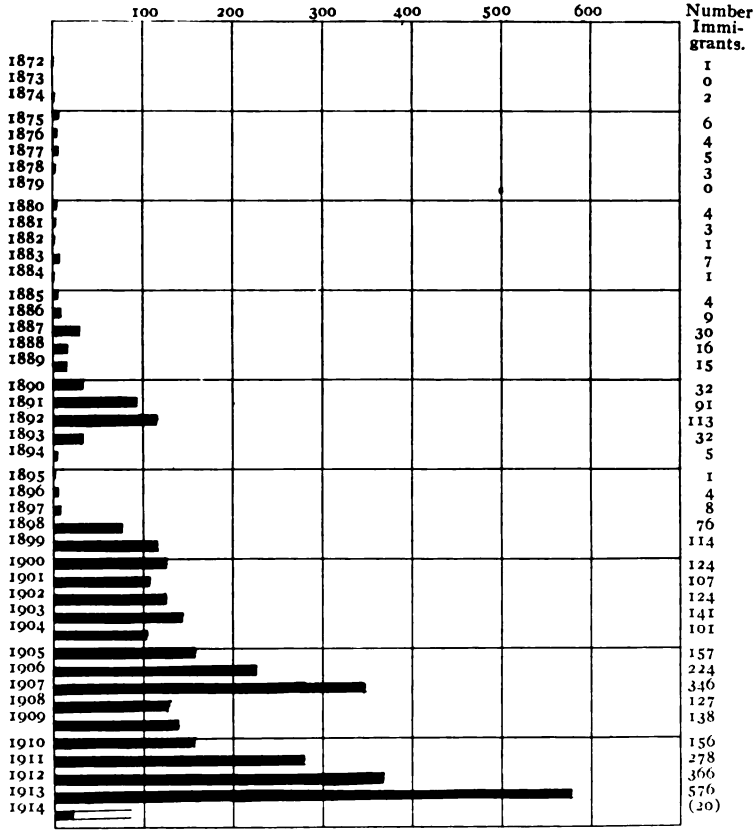
advance him money for the voyage. The young man then write to a brother, a cousin, or other relative in America and secure tickets for himself and his family. Immigrants thus assiste are far better off than those who borrow money in Russia. Thi most often happens when a man leaves home in a great hurr to avoid being caught for military service.[10] He does not hav time to dispose of his property advantageously or to wait for ticket from America, so borrows enough for its purchase fron money loaners in Russia. These are usually Jews, and the interes demanded is enormous. On the immigrant's arrival in the Unite States his relatives or friends secure a new loan for him and h is thus relieved from the necessity of paying exorbitant interest

Invariably, the purchase price of tickets to immigrants is loane without interest, since the transaction ordinarily takes place be tween relatives and is considered purely as a matter of mutua aid. In case, however, the relative is unable to raise the amoun from his own funds and the circumstances are urgent, he ca secure a loan with interest from one of his well-to-do country men. That it is a very rare thing for anyone to lose any mone in these transactions, argues well for the assisted immigrants Moreover, such aid from relatives is the best proof available tha America has not made them grasping and selfish in their newly found prosperity. It is a sign that they are keeping fresh in thei minds the condition under which they came to America, and tha they remember with gratitude the help that someone lent them It is when they begin to say that they "need all the money the can make for themselves" that they manifest the unsocial spiri which the materialism of America fosters.

An important factor in any immigration problem is the alien' length of residence in America, which immediately affects hi political status, and which is a means of demonstrating his abilit to assimilate and to rise in the social scale. In Lincoln, as w

[10] Another type of immigrant who does not come technically "assisted, according to the records, is the criminal who may or may not be aided b his relatives to escape. There are only a few of this class in the Lincol settlement, but, as a rule, they attract a great deal of attention from th public.

CHART I. Date of Immigration to America of Russian Germans Living in Lincoln, April, 1914



have seen, there is still a small representation of the earliest Russian German immigrants who came to the United States in the seventies. A larger number and a greater proportion of those who came the following decade also reside in the city. The great majority of the foreign-born population, however, are comparative newcomers. Their date of arrival distributed according to five-year periods, shows the proportion of the total Russian-born Germans in Lincoln to be as follows:

	Per Cent
Before 1899	12.1
1899–1903	17.4
1904–1908	27.3
1909–1913	43.2

Thus, nearly one half of the Russian German immigrants in Lincoln have arrived in the United States within the last five years indicated, while almost three fourths of them have lived in America less than ten years.

A further analysis according to the date of arrival shows that Russian German immigration, like all similar movements, has its ebb and flow; and thus far each incoming wave has risen higher than the preceding. During the initial period of immigration before the nineties, the largest number (30) came in the year 1887. In the following decade, the year 1892 was the crest of the wave and brought 113; in 1903, 141; in 1907, 346; and in 1913, 576. Each of these high tides is preceded and followed by an increasing number of immigrants, and represents not the growth of a single year but of a period.

This brief survey of the composition of the Russian German population of Lincoln discloses the fact that these immigrants are a homogeneous group from the German colonies of the Volga, yet having individual characteristics developed through isolated life in their respective villages during a century and a half. While these people theoretically belong to the "new" immigration of south Europe, their length of residence in America has been sufficient to produce a large number of native-born, with even a few of the second generation, in whom the possibilities for assimilation may be observed. The majority of the Russian

Germans come assisted by relatives or friends, the proportion being twice as great as for the United States as a whole. The settlements include a large number of new arrivals, almost one half having come within a recent five-year period. The history of their immigration shows that they respond to the same ebb and flow as does immigration in general, although the causes in the two instances are not identical.

II. *Location of the Settlements*

The Russian Germans in Lincoln are settled chiefly along the entire west edge of the city, in two compact groups, separated from each other and from the rest of the city by the railroad yards and the wholesale district. The north settlement extends from Seventh to Fourteenth streets and from the railway tracks to the city limits, occupying a triangular district, the half of seven blocks square. The south settlement is scattered over more territory, running from M to A streets and from Eighth street to the city limits, approximately ten blocks. On the border of each of these settlements and scattered throughout the city is an increasingly large number of Russian Germans who have left their former homes, sometimes in order to be nearer their places of occupation but primarily as an evidence of their rise in the social scale.

The locality occupied by these two settlements is the most undesirable part of town. The west edge of the city dips down into the Salt flats, a wide valley through which a large creek of the same name flows. Two smaller streams which drain a wide territory enter Salt Creek within this basin.[11] The land on these flats is most unlovely to look upon. During dry weather, mineral deposits, chiefly alkali, appear on the surface and explain the absence of trees and of almost all vegetation except coarse weeds. During wet weather, the lack of drainage in much of the settlement area makes the streets almost impassable; while prolonged periods of rain or sudden melting of the snows pour

[11] See U. S. Geological Survey, *Nebraska, Lincoln Sheet*, ed. September, 1897, reprinted November, 1909.

immense volumes of water down into the basin and turn the several individual streams into one great lake a mile or more broad.

It was this tendency to floods which soon drove the earliest inhabitants of Lincoln back to the high ground on the east and gradually resigned the west side of the city to the railway and wholesale districts.[12] The houses and stores they had built were then occupied by the various foreign nationalities which first came to Lincoln, chiefly Empire Germans and Bohemians, and by the poorer class of American laborers. When the Russian Germans began coming in the seventies, they naturally settled among those speaking their own tongue, and formed a nucleus about which later immigrants gathered. From the nineties on, when the Russian Germans began to form a noticeable part of the community, they gradually preëmpted more and more of this territory until today few families of other nationalities reside within its limits. With the growth of the railroad and wholesale districts, the two settlements became more and more cut off from each other so that now they form two distinct communities.

The location and segregation of this group of foreigners have led the municipal authorities to exclude this part of the city from all plans for improvement. As soon as the settlements became sufficiently homogeneous to differentiate them, the newspaper reporters dubbed them "Russiatown," "Little Russia," or "Little St. Petersburg" and "Little Moscow"; and the community

[12] The first heavy flood after the settlement on the present site of Lincoln was made, occurred in 1869. Again a disastrous flood took place in 1874, when the water rose two inches higher than five years before. In 1878, 1881, 1883, 1891, and 1892 the whole valley was inundated. In 1893 the creek was straightened, and it was hoped the defect was remedied; but another series of wet years proved as disastrous as before. In 1902, 1903, 1907, and 1908 the same experience was repeated. The flood of 1908 was one of the worst ever known and is a landmark in the history of the Russian German settlements. Aside from great property loss entailed, five persons were drowned by the overturning of a boat, four being children of one family. Other effects of this flood will be referred to frequently.

abandoned them to their own interests. For years the city dumped its garbage into the front yards of the south settlement, and when a protest finally arose it philanthropically transferred its refuse to the back yards of the north settlement. The word "dump" is a common one in the vocabulary of every Russian German child in the settlements. To those on the south side, it signifies a long high ridge partially overgrown with grass, forming a vantage ground on which to play, and sometimes yielding up rich treasures in the form of marbles, broken bits of pottery or brass, and discarded articles of small furniture.[13] To the child in the north settlement it means richer discoveries, for the dump has not yet been picked over; but it also means sickening odors when the breeze drives the smell of decaying garbage into his home, particularly if the wind changes while the dump is being "burned." A little kindergartner, when asked by his teacher to draw a picture of his front yard, covered an otherwise fairly clean sheet of paper with a great black spot and called it the "dump." This conception represents the growing conviction of a large part of the community that our system of garbage disposal is a great blot on a moderately clean and well-ordered city.

For many years a sewer discharged its contents into a natural depression on the edge of the south settlement, although at present it is the policy of the city to extend all such pipes to the creek. These "sinks" now furnish skating ponds for the children in winter, and in summer breeding places for amoebae and other zoological specimens over which dignified professors stoop gingerly, hurriedly gather their prey, and hasten back to their laboratories. For many years, also, the city discharged its human sewage in the same vicinity, and until 1909 the red-light district cut off the south settlement from the business portion of the city.[14]

[13] Just recently several new "dumps" for rubbish alone have been started on the edges of the south settlement. For a number of years an effort has been made to get the city to adopt scientific measures to handle the garbage problem, and in May, 1915, a bond issue of fifty thousand dollars was voted for the establishment of a garbage disposal plant, but a year has passed without anything definite being accomplished.

[14] In 1909 the county attorney enforced the law against these "houses,"

In spite of the struggle against an adverse environment, the settlements as a whole do not present the characteristics of a slum. Here and there may be found a "foul back street" or a family "of slovenly or vicious type" such as constitute a slum; but these are the rarest exceptions. Order, system, neatness and thrift are the prevailing traits in the Russian German settlements, particularly as regards the buildings. The yards show less favorable results on account of the hopeless battle with the soil and the yet uncontrolled floods. Time and again have small trees and shrubs been uprooted and carried off, and blue grass sod covered inches deep with debris, so that the majority of householders despair of ever getting permanent results. In an attempt to raise the yards above the flood level, many of the people have filled them in with ashes and clay from excavated cellars which can be secured for the mere cost of hauling, and have thus shut off all hope of cultivation. But if the yards lack vegetation they do not lack system and order; and any place filled with junk or rags may safely be set down as not Russian German. A mended though often well-worn sidewalk, scrupulously clean even in the muddiest weather, leads from the street to the house. Fences, porches, houses, outhouses and barns are all neatly and freshly painted. The combination of colors is not always the most fastidious—chrome yellow porches and bright blue houses are conspicuous among the prevailing white of the dwellings and red of the barns—but everything which needs paint is protected by it.

Neglect and decay of buildings is nowhere visible. On the other hand, many of the houses in the settlement are made over from half tumbled-down structures which were bought at a low price, and remodeled under the skillful and painstaking hand of the owner. The Russian German never occupies a house of this sort—unpainted, partly windowless, and dilapidated—and if such are seen in the settlements, the inhabitants will be found to be negroes or the lowest class of American poor.

and since that date segregated vice has not existed in Lincoln. An earlier attempt (1904) made by the city council failed of enforcement by the police. Cf. *Nebraska State Journal*, May 28, 1904.

In the matter of streets the city has not set the Russian Germans a deserving example; and whatever is praiseworthy here is due to the people themselves and not to any municipal aid. Sidewalk construction in Lincoln is in the hands of the property owners; and long, straight stretches of concrete walks in many places in the settlements show the results of community action among the foreign people. The construction of sidewalks along other almost impassable spaces is held up by a few unprogressive property owners whom the city might coerce if the people had any confidence in their ability to secure action from the officials. But the authorities have not done even their plain duty, let alone helping the people to do theirs. Viaduct approaches and street crossings have been neglected month after month, until some teacher or other influential citizen who had to use that highway sent in a complaint and got the necessary walks. Ungraded streets and undrained pools remain untouched year in and year out as mute evidence of careless and neglectful municipal control.

The two settlements demonstrate the exclusive character of the Russian Germans not merely in the fact that they segregate themselves from the rest of the city, but in their distribution within the settlements. It will be seen at a glance how largely the people

TABLE II. DISTRIBUTION OF RUSSIAN GERMANS WITHIN NORTH AND SOUTH SETTLEMENTS, BY PRINCIPAL "COLONIES"[15]

"Colonies" Having 50 or More Native Citizens in Lincoln

	North	South		North	South
Balzer	20	308	Kolb	2	62
Beideck	6	256	Kukkus	223	7
Dietel	43	13	Laub	90	3
Frank	4	343	Norka	385	133
Franker Chutor	0	58	Schilling	1	151
Huck	225	12	Walter	3	176
Kauz	73	6	Warenburg	7	70

are grouped in Lincoln according to their native villages, the few exceptions to this rule being in nearly all instances cases of intermarriage.[16] This local heterogeneity of the settlements is

[15] The term "colony" has been the official name, in Russia, for these German villages, and the inhabitants have been known as "colonists."

[16] Incidentally this shows how little intermarriage there has been.

preserved in the colloquial speech of the people, who speak of the north settlement as the "Norker bottom" and the south settlement as the "Franker bottom" and who denominate the various churches not by their confessional names of Lutheran, Reformed, or Congregational but as the "Kukkus," "Balzer," "Norker," "Beideck," or "Franker" churches. Again within the settlements the people from each village live in groups, and whole streets will be occupied by former residents of one colony, and other streets by those from another colony. This is especially true of the new immigrants, although not confined to them.

III. *Dwellings and Families*

Housing conditions among the Russian Germans in the settlements present some distinct contrasts to those in the rest of the city. They are neither as bad as in the poorer sections nor as good as those of American people in the same financial circumstances. Ordinarily the dwellings are small, because the people economize in fuel, and consider extra or unnecessary rooms a useless waste. The average house is a one-family dwelling of three or four rooms located on a twenty-five or thirty-five foot lot. A very few large houses have been built to accommodate undivided families such as exist in the village communities in Russia; but the rapidity with which the family in America dissolves and leaves such houses a financial loss, has fortunately discouraged their erection. Some of the few which have been built have been divided into two or three parts and sold to be remodeled into small residences.

The following table shows the number of rooms per dwelling for the houses within the settlements. Since the size of the houses varies materially in the two sections the figures are given for both districts.[17] The four-room house is the most popular in the north settlement, with the five-room dwelling but little ahead in the south. Of the houses in the north side, 23.7 per cent., or almost one fourth, are two room dwellings while in the south side, but

[17] The Russian German population living in Lincoln outside the two settlements is not considered in the study of housing conditions because the people conform entirely to the American communities in which they live.

TABLE III. NUMBER OF ROOMS PER DWELLING OF HOUSES WITHIN THE SETTLEMENTS

Number of Rooms	North	South	Total
Summer kitchens:			
1	18	.....	18
2	13	2	15
Dwellings:			
1	....	1	1
2	75	42	117
3	60	117	177
4	105	123	228
5	50	137	187
6	30	47	77
7	10	26	36
8	6	15	21
9	2	7	9
10	3	2	5
Total number of rooms	1,390	2,284	3,674
Total number of dwellings	372	519	891
Average number of rooms per dwelling	3.7	4.4	4.1

8.5 per cent. are of this size. The "summer kitchens" are differentiated from dwellings of the same size because they always indicate two houses on a lot and mean more crowding than the single dwellings.

The "summer kitchen" is a distinctively Russian German institution. It is a separate building, of one large or two small rooms, situated a few feet from the kitchen door of the main dwelling. In the German colonies in Russia, this structure was the chief means of protection against fire, which proves so destructive among thatched roofs. In summer, when the buildings were not protected by snow, no fires were allowed built in the main dwelling but all cooking had to be done in these "Sommerkuechen," which must be located as far as possible from the other buildings of the yard and must be constructed of brick or stone.[18] The custom has been transferred to this country although the occasion for it is removed. The buildings are used in summer, as formerly, for cooking and eating and the main dwelling is thus kept cooler and more free from flies. In winter they are usually rented out to returned "beetfielders" or to new immigrants, and the profit accruing from these structures makes

[18] Klaus, *Unsere Kolonien*, Appendix, 35.

them very popular in the more restricted area of the north side.

It is a tribute to the Russian German population that, without the guidance of housing laws, they have built the sort of dwelling which now so largely exists in their settlements. Happily, their tendency to homeownership has freed them from the landlord who, desiring to get the most revenue out of his investments, crowds many families under one roof and creates our tenement problem. With their settlements located on the edge of the city, they have been able to expand countrywards; and instead of adapting themselves to discarded buildings such as immigrants in the cities must crowd into, each family has built for itself a house to suit its own simple needs. Although they have paid for inferior vacant lots prices far beyond their value, the communities have suffered less from this exploitation of real estate agents than they would have suffered had they subjected themselves to landlordism.[19] It is a matter of deep regret that the most unsanitary and overcrowded houses in the settlements are the few owned and rented by Lincoln capitalists.

The desire of the Russian German for homeownership is a practically universal characteristic and accounts largely for the generally good housing conditions among them. It gives them a definite purpose in economizing; it encourages them in caring for property, keeping it repaired, and making permanent improvements; and it protects the family life by preserving its privacy, individuality, and pride. The extent to which the Russian Germans own their homes, either free or mortgaged, appears from the following table:

[19] The early history of the settlements in Lincoln favored this individual initiative. Many acres of land adjoining the settlements in pioneer days belonged to the state or to the railway companies, and the immigrants who came during the hard times of the nineties, when there was little sale or use for such land, "squatted" on it and, undisturbed by the owners, put up small houses in which they lived until they were able to buy a lot and build again. In one corner of the north settlement even an unused street was preëmpted and until quite recently several small houses occupied the middle of it.

TABLE IV. PROPRIETORSHIP OF HOMES

	Residence in America More than 5 Years		Residence in America Less than 5 Years	
	Number	Per Cent.	Number	Per Cent.
Total heads of families	696	100.00	359	100.00
Homes owned:				
Free	422	60.8	31	8.7
Mortgaged	96	13.7	40	11.1
Homes rented	178	25.5	288	80.2

Three fourths of those who have been in America five years or longer own their homes either free or mortgaged; while one fifth of those who have lived in the country less than that period are home owners. A mortgaged home is more often a sign of advancing social position than it is of careless financiering; and it is in these homes where sometimes overwork and neglect of the family are most evident, on account of the strenuous efforts made to pay off the debt occasioned by the move into a better neighborhood.[20] Some of the families living in rented homes are young married people who prefer living alone to sharing the parental roof. In these cases, the head of the family worked until his marriage for his father; and, as is customary, turned all his earnings over to the parents, so that when he came to set up his own home he had nothing to start on. A few of the native-born heads of families and some of those who have lived in America a generation show no tendency toward home ownership.

In so far as the single family dwelling is indicative of good housing conditions, the Russian German settlements are most commendable. There are factors, however, which, though temporary in themselves, are constantly present; and which offer a real problem to a semi-rural community which ought to be entirely free from a tenement population. Overcrowding in the settlements and unsanitary conditions are the chief of these

factors. Although figures cannot adequately represent the former, because it depends upon so many different elements, it is worth while to see what they show and then to supplement that information with specific examples. The lack of a proper standard of comparison such as would be furnished by a corresponding study of the native laboring element of Lincoln reduces the value of the following statistics, which can be compared only with totals for the city at large.

Overcrowding varies greatly in different parts of the two settlements, some streets being no more thickly populated than the average residence portion of the city while other blocks have more than twice the normal number of inhabitants. The density of population also varies with the seasons and with the waves of immigration. During the winter when the people are in from the beetfields, conditions are much aggravated; as they are also when new immigrants come who are sheltered temporarily with relatives or who occupy summer kitchens or rooms in other houses until they can afford to rent a separate establishment. In 1914, when the census of the Russian Germans was taken, there were many of the latter class in the settlements, so that overcrowding was greater than usual. Every possible nook and cranny was packed with people, as is evidenced by the fact that several families of newcomers had to rent places just beyond the border of the settlement. Overcrowding varies with the length of residence in America, being almost always confined to the raw immigrants. A family of eight who came to Lincoln in 1907 and occupied a two-room house the first three years of their residence there, now live in an eight-room dwelling but complain of "being too crowded."

The number of persons per dwelling in the Russian German settlements in 1914 was 6.0 as compared with 4.6 for the city at large.[21] Since the latter figure counts hotels, boarding houses, and apartments each as one dwelling, it would reduce the proportion for the residence section of Lincoln, and intensify the comparison between it and the foreign settlements. Whether the persons are largely adults or children, how many families they represent, and the size of the dwellings they occupy are vital

[21] *Thirteenth Census of the United States*, 1910, Abstract, 262.

factors in judging the social significance of these figures. We have seen that the average number of rooms in each dwelling was 4.1, thus making the average number of persons per room 1.4.[22] There are no census figures covering this point, hence the reader must appeal to his own experience for a standard of comparison. In the north settlement, which is compactly built up, there is an average of over 100 persons to the block. On the south side no similar estimate can be made because the people are scattered in groups over a wide territory, with few blocks entirely occupied.

The large proportion of children and the few boarders in the settlements, facts which will be demonstrated later, reduce the evils of overcrowding. The following specific examples taken at random show the worst extent to which the practice goes.

Dwelling number 7: summer kitchen of one room; one family of six; four children ranging from four months to four years.

Dwelling number 10: two rooms; one family of seven; three daughters aged 16, 17, and 19, and two sons, 15 and 12, respectively.

Dwelling number 16: two rooms; one family of eight; four children from five to twelve years of age; the grandfather and one boarder (a relative whose family is in Russia).

Dwelling number 65: five rooms; two families (brothers) of sixteen persons; one contains five children from four to fifteen years.

Dwelling number 120: nine rooms; five families of twenty people; (1) parents and two small children; (2) widow; (3) parents, three small children and a boarder (single man); (4) parents and two small children; (5) parents and three small children.

Dwelling number 220: four rooms; three families of fourteen persons including eight children under twelve years of age.

Dwelling number 274: three rooms; two families of twelve people: first includes five children from ten months to seven years; second, three children aged 4, 13, and 17, respectively.

Dwelling number 465: two rooms; one family of eight; six children ranging from six months to eleven years.

Dwelling number 506: seven rooms; two families of nineteen people; first includes nine children ranging from two to seventeen years; second includes five children from one to eleven years and a boarder.

Dwelling number 764: four rooms; three families of twelve persons; (1) parents and four small children; (2) husband and wife; (3) parents

Dwelling number 815: three rooms; two families of eleven people; first includes three small children, the grandmother and a boarder; the second includes one small child and a boarder.

Dwelling number 1029: four rooms; one family of eleven; five children from four to twelve years; four male boarders.

The evils of overcrowding are both physical and moral, and so far as the people can mitigate them, they are reduced. Ordinarily, the chief physical harm is unsanitariness which arises from lack of cleanliness, of air, of sewage facilities, and of pure water. Of the first, there is no absolute criterion. The housewife who scoured her broomhandle was formerly the standard of this virtue, but it is quite probable that the modern housewife would object to the sparing use of water by which she achieved undeniably good results. The Russian German prides himself on the cleanliness of his housekeeper and the highest compliment he can pay his wife is to attribute to her this characteristic. One of the chief reasons he objects to being called a "Russian" is explained by the common expression which the German colonist contemptuously applies to his enemy, *i. e.*, "as dirty as a Russian."[23] The most overcrowded homes in the settlements show remarkable results produced through order, system, and hard work. Whether the furniture be little or much, it is arranged with care and precision. The bed is the especial pride of the housewife. Piled high with feathers, with immense pillows at the head, and sheets bordered with handmade lace, this article of furniture is the object of scrupulous care. Sunny days find fences and lines filled with bed clothes undergoing their frequent airings.

Saturdays are as sacredly devoted to cleanliness as Sundays are to godliness and no home misses a thorough overhauling.[24] It would be as disgraceful a thing for a woman to neglect scrubbing her house and her children on that day as it would be to have her husband's Sunday shirt buttonless and his boots unblacked. A group of little girls called at their teacher's home one Sunday

[23] In the Lincoln settlements, the phrase is transposed to "as dirty as the Irish," and is a popular one among the children.

[24] It is the custom in the German colonies in Russia for the people to sweep the streets every Saturday in preparation for the following day.

afternoon and were taken to her kitchen to make some candy. One of them, a ten-year-old, gave one glance as she entered the room, and then in a tone of mingled disgust and triumph remarked, "You didn't scrub yesterday, did you?" Teacher hastened to explain that "Katie" came on Mondays and that she always scrubbed after she washed; and though the explanation was accepted without argument, the child undoubtedly considered that she had "caught" her teacher in a transgression no whit less than some for which the pupil had been chastised.

The Russian German housewife is a persistent and furious scrubber. No mop disgraces her home, and a broom is too valuable an article to be spoiled by this process. Armed with soap and a cloth or brush, she drops upon her knees and vigorously attacks parlor and kitchen oilcloth alike. Even porches, and walks, or "stepping stones" which may replace the latter, are subject to the same process, although in this instance she rises from her knees and assumes a stooping posture possible only to a seasoned athlete as she gradually worms her way down the walk. Her girls and boys are early taught the art of scrubbing, and their constant application to it accounts for the fact that a stranger, walking through the settlements, can invariably pick out the Russian German houses by the looks of the front porch. The cynic will reply, "their front porches ought to be clean, for they are never used," and there is no denying that in the majority of Russian German homes this part of the house bears the same relation to the rest of the dwelling as did the old-fashioned parlor of our grandparents. Except in the rather rare instances where a bell graces the front door, whoever would "enter in" must go to the rear. The reason for this lies, partly, back in the old home in Russia. There the houses are built directly upon the street with only windows in the front. The door is at the side and cannot be reached except by gaining admission to the yard through the large or the small gate. This method of architecture was adopted when the German colonists first went to Russia as a means of protection against the Kirghiz, Kalmucks, and robbers with which the country was so long infested, and it remains unchanged to this day. When the Germans came to

Dr. J. F. Krueger

America, they adopted the type of buildings prevailing here but retained, though all unconsciously, their ingrained conviction that he who enters in at the front of the house is a "thief and a robber."[25]

The people also show the effect of their former environment in their sparing use of water as a cleansing agent. In the colonies there were the communal sources of water supply as we have in Lincoln, but instead of having the water piped into each house where unlimited quantities were easily available, each householder was obliged to carry from the spring, creek, or river all that was used for household purposes. Under such circumstances, it may be imagined what economies were practiced in its use, and in this respect the Russian scorns his German neighbor. The Slav performs his ablutions from a ewer hung from the ceiling and (according to his interpretation) washes the dirt away from his face, while the Teuton returns a good share of it to its original place by using the water from a basin. Moreover, the Russians are famous bathers and no *isba* is so poor that it does not include a pile of stones for the *mujik's* vapor bath. The German, on the other hand, contents himself with the less primitive but less effective "tub," and the mark of his complete assimilation in America appears when he considers a bathroom a necessity and not a luxury. The tendency of the Russian German to economize in the use of water was shown in an exaggerated but not exactly typical way by the following incident. A kindergarten teacher had threatened for sometime to send home one of her pupils who came to school with a dirty face, and one

[25] The heavy wooden shutters on the windows of the houses shown in the illustration preceding may be seen on many of the dwellings in the Lincoln settlements. In Russia they served primarily as a defense against robbers, and secondarily as a protection against the cold. In Lincoln they are found chiefly on houses owned by "beetfielders" and are used only during the absence of the family in summer to protect window panes from the unerring aim of mischievous boys.

It is interesting to observe that the better of these two houses belongs to a man who spent several years in Lincoln as a section hand. He returned as "a rich man" with two or three thousand dollars and built this house, which is one of the finest in a colony of 12,000 people.

morning she carried out her threat by taking the lad home. The grandmother was scrubbing the front porch, and she promptly applied the cloth, with which she was scrubbing, to the child's face and produced an effect which the teacher pronounced "satisfactory."

So far as soap and water are concerned, the Russian German home is faultless, but it suffers from the lack of ventilation. The winters in Russia are so severe that every crack and crevice of the houses is closed to shut out the cold and to conserve the heat; and the weather of Nebraska, though milder, is resisted in the same way. Moreover the small size of the houses here discourages ventilation and on account of the risk from drafts, pure air becomes almost as dangerous as bad air. It is an easy thing, where the sleeping apartments are shut off from the rest of the house, to throw them open at night and leave them thus for half the day; but where there are only one or two rooms in the house, the problem becomes more complicated. Again, the people do not feel the need of fresh air.[26] There is the former, almost universal, notion that some especial danger lurks in the night air; and that outdoor air is especially bad for sick people. This tendency to keep the house closed too tightly results in a faint odor attaching to the clothing of the people which is taken by those who do not know them to be a sign of soiled garments or unbathed bodies. This slight odor is often the basis for unwarranted prejudice against an otherwise cleanly people.

These peculiarities of economy in the use of clean water and pure air are the results of environment and quickly improve under changed conditions. The younger element among the immigrants is less superstitious and more susceptible to suggestion. The example of the American homes in which the mothers work, the teaching of the schools, and the better type of houses which the immigrants acquire after a few years in America, all aid in effecting the change. A young miss of fifteen, after hearing a health talk by a woman physician before a club of school girls, declared: "I can't stand to sleep with the windows shut. My

stepmother complains that it is too cold in the morning, but I tell her to lie still until I get the house aired out, and I'll do the work."

Sanitary living conditions are not wholly dependent upon interior cleanliness of the homes and upon pure air; for in a city, and especially in overcrowded sections, the problem of sewage and water supply is vital. These, however, will be discussed in a later chapter under the head of health conditions and only the moral effects of overcrowding will be considered here. These depend largely upon the composition of the "families" in the overcrowded districts. A two-room dwelling occupied by eight people is manifestly an example of overcrowding from the sanitary point of view; but its moral effect will differ vastly as to the age, sex, and relationship of the individuals. The evil decreases in proportion as they all belong to one family, and as the age of the children is low or their sex the same. But let them be a combination of two families, brought about by second marriages, with ages differing widely; or a group of single or married male boarders in a family containing girls or young women, and the problem is greatly intensified. Hence an analysis of the composition of these families is necessary to ascertain the moral effects of overcrowding. Reserving the statistical tables for a later use, the two vital facts in this connection are: first, the number of boarders in the settlements is comparatively small; and second, the number of small children is comparatively large.

The small number of boarders is due to the fact that immigration occurs almost wholly by families and that the young unattached persons usually leave the settlement, either for work in other parts of the city, or for other locations. In the north settlement there were only 20 boarders listed in the census of 1914, and in the south settlement, 61.[27] Of these, 16 were married men whose families were in Russia, 42 were single men; and three were women—one divorced and two single. About a third of these were boarding with relatives, usually with a brother. The

[27] It is possible that some of the boarders in the north settlement were not listed, through a mistaken notion that it might affect the taxes of the informant.

majority were young men in the twenties who came in the recent immigration chiefly to escape military service; and the total number, comparatively small as it is, was much larger than usual. Most of them are boarded singly, although two groups of four, one of three, and six of two each are found. In almost every case they must share the sleeping quarters of some members of the family although in all but six cases separate rooms are possible. As a rule, the families in which these men stay contain only small children, so that the bad moral effects are reduced to a minimum.

With the Russian German, the keeping of boarders is often not so much a matter of choice as it is governed by a dislike of violating the customary rules of hospitality. A woman who lived in a comparatively spacious house bemoaned the unexpected arrival of her husband's nephew—a married man who left his family in Russia and hurriedly came to America to avoid a threatened return to the army. She did not want to board him; he made so much work, for he didn't know how to keep the house clean; but "it would be shame for us not to keep him, for he is our *friend*."

IV. *Distribution by Families*

The organization of the Russian German family in Lincoln shows the transition from the patriarchal to the modern type. Hence, the number of families returned in the census is indicative of neither the undivided nor the divided family, nor does it agree with the number of married couples and of widowed persons with unmarried children. There are many families where married sons live with their parents and where the *housefather* controls the financial affairs of the entire group. There are other families where married brothers dwell together, sharing some of the details of living but with no common financial interests. Finally the modern family composed of parents and unmarried children is largely represented.

The number of families of Russian Germans in Lincoln is as follows:[28]

[28] This includes only those Russian Germans for whom complete data

	Families	Individuals
North Settlement	425	2,246
South Settlement	631	3,148
Outside the Settlements	132	706
Total	1,188	6,100

The average number of persons per Russian German family is 5.14 compared with 4.2 for the city of London and 4.5 for the United States as a whole.[29] In this respect it approaches more nearly the eighteenth, than the twentieth, century type of family for in 1790 the average size of the white family in the United States was 5.8 persons.[30]

The size of the family as it actually exists in the Russian German settlements, *i. e.*, including all those living in one family group without regard to relationship or lack of it, is shown in the following table:[31]

TABLE V. SIZE OF FAMILIES

Families	Number of Persons Contained in Each Family											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Number	3	110	161	175	157	163	122	78	41	19	6	1
Per cent	.3	10.6	15.5	16.9	15.2	15.7	11.8	7.5	4	1.8	.6	.1

The four-member family is the most largely represented, closely followed by the six-, three-, and five-member groups. Compared with the same type of family for the United States as a whole,[32] a significant difference appears in the very small number of

was secured. There are about 400 persons besides these, not here represented.

[29] *Thirteenth Census of the United States*, 1910, Abstract with supplement for Nebraska, 259, 262. These comparisons must be used cautiously, since the bases are not always the same.

[30] See Rossiter, "The Significance of the Decreasing Proportion of Children," in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, XXXIV, No. 1, 71–80.

[31] These figures are based only on the families within the settlement area where conditions are typically Russian German.

[32] The statistics for the United States are found in Mayo-Smith, *Statistics and Sociology*, 186.

TABLE VI. COMPARATIVE SIZE OF FAMILIES AMONG RUSSIAN GERMANS AND IN THE UNITED STATES AS A WHOLE

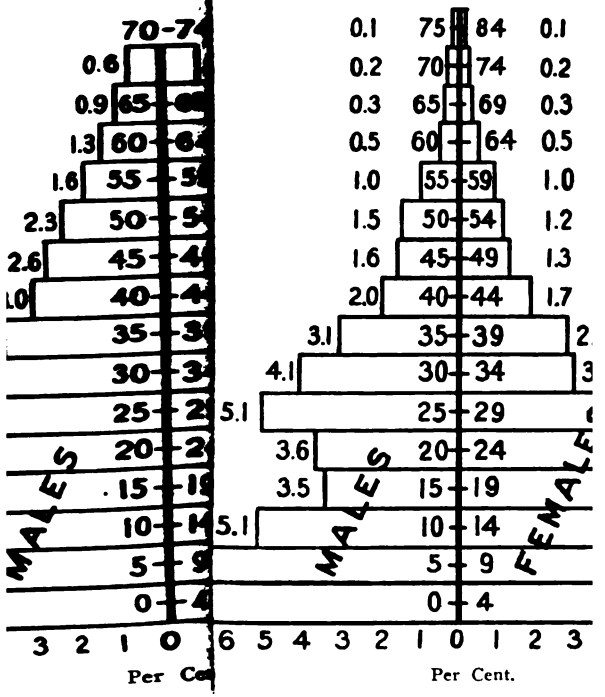
	Russian German	United States
1-member family	.30	3.63
2- 6-member family	73.90	73.33
7-10-member family	25.10	20.97
11-12-member family	.70	2.07

persons among the Russian Germans living alone. This fact is indicative of their strong tendency toward family life. The widowed remarry, often at an advanced age; or, otherwise, if their children are grown, they make their homes with them. The comparatively small number of families of eleven members and over is also significant. The figures for the United States are based largely upon boarding houses and hotels where all those living under one roof are classed as a family. In the immigrant quarters of the large cities or in foreign districts like the anthracite coal communities in Pennsylvania, these statistics indicate crowded and unwholesome conditions, where many boarders are housed in small quarters. The few families of this size among the Russian Germans demonstrates the fact already mentioned, that considering the size of the immigrant group, the number of boarders is small, and the evils arising from their presence is at a minimum. The percentage of two-to-six-member families is practically the same for the Russian Germans as for the United States as a whole. The percentage of families consisting of from seven to ten members is considerably larger among the Russian Germans and this is the true index of the comparative size of natural families in the two groups.

V. *Distribution According to Age, Sex, and Conjugal Condition*

The resolving of a population into these factors is a necessary prelude to the explanation of certain social phenomena which that particular group exhibits. For example a high death rate may be due to the unsanitary conditions under which a people live, or it may be largely explained by the fact that a great proportion of the population is of the age when the expectancy of death is greatest, i. e., under one year or over fifty. Again, criminality

nth Census of the United States.)



Population of Un Russian German Population of Linc

depends partly upon the comparative number of males and females in a community, and partly upon the percentage of males of the criminal age. Illegitimacy, or the lack of it, depends upon the number of single persons of marriageable age, as well as upon the social customs and ideals of the groups. These factors must all be kept in mind in any discussion of social conditions among the Russian Germans, for upon them depend largely the test of the morality or the immorality, of the desirableness or the undesirableness, of the group.

The distribution of the Russian German population of Lincoln according to age periods is shown in Chart II.[33]

The most striking thing is the abnormally large proportion of persons in the lower age groups: 22.1 per cent. under five years of age among the Russian Germans as compared with 9.9 per cent. for the city of Lincoln and 11.6 per cent. for the United States. The local charts show increases in the middle age periods, the total city population being swollen most largely by young people (20–24 years of age) who come from the rural districts either to enter industry or to attend school, and the Russian German population being most largely increased by immigrants (25–35 years of age) who come here direct from Russia. The small proportion of Russian Germans above sixty years of age indicates the comparative recency of the immigration and the fact that few old people emigrate from Russia.[34] The small proportion of young people from 15 to 25 is striking, and somewhat difficult to account for. The smaller number of males in these groups is due to the *Wanderlust* of youth which leads a large number of young men to leave their father's house, usually without parental consent, and seek adventure or labor elsewhere.

[33] Incidentally this chart illustrates the principle of the stability of large numbers and the instability of small. The figure for the United States shows a gradual decline, while the variations of the other two are neither uniform nor gradual.

[34] The top of the pyramid for Lincoln cannot be completed because the census of 1910 gives only broad-age periods above 40 years. The group from 40–49 years was resolved into two five-year periods on the basis of proportions given in the census of 1900, but no further estimate was possible.

Some enter the navy, one or two have found their way to the Philippines, while many have stopped on the Pacific coast where they may have relatives or friends. Rarely does one become a "hobo"; sometimes their hard experiences bring them back home subdued and sobered; but more often they set up independent establishments and remain away permanently. Some of the steadiest and most ambitious young men in the community have sought release from home restraints and old-fashioned ideas and customs of family life in this way.

A further comparison by broad-age groups shows some interesting facts. The abnormally large proportion of children under

TABLE VII. AGE GROUPS, BY PERCENTAGES

	0–14 Years	15–39	40–59	60 and Over
Russian German, Lincoln, 1914	48.0	37.7	11.3	2.2
Total, Lincoln, 1910	26.1	45.4	20.2	8.2
Foreign white stock,[35] United States, 1910	21.5	46.4	23.0	8.1
Total, United States, 1910	32.1	43.2	17.8	6.6

fifteen years of age among the Russian Germans is indicative of the high birth rate prevailing among them and of immigration by families at the period of life when fecundity is the greatest. The much smaller percentage of foreign white stock in this lower age group is accounted for by the fact that so many of the other foreign-born groups are adults without their families; and, although the fecundity of all immigrant mothers is very high, the combination of the two elements reduces the proportion of children.[36] The large percentage of Russian Germans in the lower age group implies (1) a high infant mortality; (2) a heavy burden upon the community in providing educational facilities, and a great opportunity in "training up the child in the way he should go"; and (3) a heavy burden upon the immigrant in providing for so large a proportion of non-producers within his group.

[35] Foreign white stock includes those born abroad and native-born having one or both parents born abroad.

[36] Only 5.7 per cent. of the foreign-born are under fifteen years of age, while 38.0 per cent. of the native-born of foreign parentage are under

The distribution of the Russian Germans according to sex shows a normal, stable population. Males comprise 51.0 per cent., and females 49.0 per cent., of the total number of persons. This comparatively equal proportion of the sexes is another evidence of the family character of this immigration. The few married males who are from Russia without their families, and a small number of young men from the rural districts attending school in Lincoln, account in part for the slight excess of males. The city as a whole shows 49.7 per cent. males and 50.3 per cent. females, an excess of females in every age period from ten to forty-five.

The comparatively equal proportion of the sexes among the Russian Germans insures the establishment of homes and the normal increase of this element of the population through birth. It tends to retard assimilation by checking intermarriage, but this is well for both the immigrant and the community because a too sudden change cannot be other than superficial. On the other hand, it permits early marriages to which the people have been accustomed, and lessens impure living and criminality which might otherwise result.

The tendency to establish homes, encouraged by the favorable age and sex distribution of the Russian German population, is shown by an analysis of their conjugal condition.[37] The Russian German males show a larger percentage of single persons over fifteen than do the females, while the latter exceed in each of the other three divisions. While normally about one half a population is married, the Russian German males show 76.3 per cent. and the females 80.0 per cent. The smaller proportion of males among the widowed (1.2 males as compared with 4.0 females) shows the universal fact of their greater tendency to remarry; as does also the smaller percentage of divorced males. When the comparison is extended to the other groups in the table, it shows in every item the greater tendency of the Russian German to marry, to remarry, and to stay married.

[37] The statistics for Lincoln and for the United States are taken from the *Thirteenth Census of the United States*, 1910, 599, 149.

TABLE VIII. CONJUGAL CONDITION OF THE POPULATION OVER FIFTEEN YEARS, BY PERCENTAGES[38]

Males

	Total	Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced
Russian German, 1914	100.0	22.3	76.3	1.2	.2
Lincoln, 1910	100.0	37.5	57.3	3.7	.5
United States, 1910:					
Total	100.0	38.7	55.8	4.5	.5
Native white of foreign parents	100.0	50.2	46.3	2.8	.4
Foreign born	100.0	31.8	62.1	5.4	.3

Females

Russian German, 1914	100.0	15.6	80.0	4.0	.4
Lincoln, 1910	100.0	31.9	56.9	10.3	.9
United States, 1910:					
Total	100.0	29.7	58.9	10.6	.6
Native white of foreign parents	100.0	41.7	51.1	6.5	.5
Foreign born	100.0	18.3	66.5	14.7	.3

An analysis of the conjugal condition according to ages further reveals certain social facts. To a very large extent, the females marry earlier than the males and both marry before the age of twenty-five. Out of a total of 1,635 males over 15 years of age,

TABLE IX. CONJUGAL CONDITION OF RUSSIAN GERMAN POPULATION ACCORDING TO SEX AND AGE PERIODS, BY NUMBERS

Age	Single		Married		Widowed		Divorced	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
15–19 years	211	196	1	25	..	1	1	1
20–24 years	111	36	108	193	..	..	1	..
25–29 years	31	3	282	316	2	..	..	..
30–34 years	6	1	244	182	..	1	..	1
35–39 years	4	1	183	161	2	1	..	2
40–44 years	1	1	125	100	..	1	1	1
45–49 years	..	..	94	81	1	1	..	..
50–54 years	1	..	88	67	2	6	..	..
55–59 years	..	..	62	52	1	9		..
60–64 years	..	..	28	22	5	13	..	..
65–69 years	..	..	19	16	1	8	..	..
70 and over	..	..	13	5	6	19		

only 43 were single at the age of twenty-five, and out of a total of 1,523 females in the same age group, only 6 were unmarried at twenty-five.[39] The largest number of married persons is between the ages of 25 and 35, at the most prolific period of life for rearing children. By far the largest number of widowed persons is beyond the age of fifty, and it is significant that out of 60 widows, 56 are past the age of child bearing. The smaller number of divorced males does not signify especially that the Russian German women are more addicted to separation than the men, but often the woman remains in the settlement while the man hides himself in an up-town boarding house or in some other locality. Sometimes he has deserted the wife, either before or after leaving Russia, and is thus unrecorded here.

The influence of the conjugal condition of the Russian German upon crime, suicide, insanity, illegitimacy, and the adult death-rate, all of which are decreased among the married, is difficult to determine accurately; but its influence upon the increase of the population is clearly evident. Every condition among the Russian Germans in the Lincoln settlements is favorable to a high birth rate, even higher than in their former home in Russia. The population contains fewer persons in the upper age groups beyond the child-rearing period because the old people do not emigrate. It is more healthy as a whole because the process of selection necessary for entrance into the United States eliminates the physically unfit. It contains many raw immigrants, because Lincoln is a distributing point for this group who come here direct from Russia, and therefore shows the primitive tendency of the foreigner toward large families. Finally the abnormally large proportion of young married people, showing the universal tendency toward marriage and the early age at which it occurs, and the long duration of married life due to few divorces and constant remarriage, produce ideal conditions for a high birth rate.

[39] Something less than a dozen of the forty-three single males are university students living outside Lincoln, and hence not an integral part of the city population.

CHAPTER II

Birth and Death, Marriage and Divorce

I. *Vital Statistics in Nebraska*

Vital statistics are in such a chaotic condition in the majority of the United States that there is no adequate or reliable basis for a study of the phenomena they present. The following results obtained from the records available must be accepted as approximate and not final, and the excuse for presenting them at all is that they are the only ones which exist, that they are fairly approximate, as any one knows who is familiar with conditions in the foreign settlements in Lincoln, and that they may form a basis for comparison when more accurate work is made available by the state. It is unfortunate that there is no means of checking the results here tabulated; for the Russian Germans are never separated from the other groups and unless one is familiar with the family names of these immigrants he cannot sort out the data relating to them.[1]

Nebraska's tardy recognition of the value of vital statistics and the spasmodic and imperfect enforcement of the laws relating to it are typical of the American attitude toward this subject. There is some comfort, but no help, in the fact that our backwardness in this regard has been due to two factors, the absence of which none of us regret; viz., a state church and compulsory military service. Our system of representation gave us the federal decennial census, the original purpose of which was purely political. As the social horizon has broadened, the social value of the census has become more and more pronounced; and an increasing demand has come for a continuous registration, by the

smaller units, of the facts which go to make up what is aptly called "vital statistics."[2,3]

Nebraska has proceeded with the ordinary leisure of the unconcerned in securing the registration of such data. There has not been lack of law, but lack of public sentiment behind the law to secure its enforcement. Marriage was naturally the first event to require registration and these records were not so completely ignored; for every one recognized the state's jurisdiction and control over this institution, the conduct of which was carefully detailed in the statutes. But not so with births and deaths. The congregate growth of the population through immigration was jealously guarded and widely advertised, but its genetic increase and its decrease passed unnoticed.

A Nebraska law of February 12, 1865, provided that the county commissioners require the assessors to make a full and complete return annually of all births and deaths of the preceding year.[4]

[2] In the United States Census of 1900 the only states in which the registration record was accepted as accurate were Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, with certain counties and cities of New York and New Jersey. Bailey, *Modern Social Conditions*, 8. In 1910 the registration area included the New England States, Pennsylvania, and Michigan and the cities of New York and Washington, D. C. "Birth Registration, an Aid in Protecting the Lives and Rights of Children," United States Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, *Monograph*, number 1, 16.

[3] "While the United States led the world with respect to the census of population, we still rank with the most unprogressive and semi-civilized countries as concerns the registration of births and deaths." C. L. Wilbur, "The Census and the Public Health Movement," in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, XXXVII, number 2, 45.

[4] *Complete Session Laws of Nebraska*, I, 430–432. The statute made elaborate provision for the return of these records. Upon blanks provided them the assessors were to make tables showing the age periods of the population, the sex of those born, with the number of plural and still births, and the cause of death, tabulated by months and by age, with sex in each case. The nativity of each person was also to be recorded, as were all cases of idiocy and insanity. The annual returns were to be made to the county clerk on the third Monday of April. Although this would not now be considered a model law because it did not provide continuous and prompt registration of births and deaths, and because it did not throw the responsibility upon the householder or his physician, yet its

That the law was not being observed is suggested by an amendment passed in 1875 requiring the assessors to take oath as to the correctness of their returns and providing a certain sum per capita for the names registered.[5] The effort to secure vital statistics was finally given up in 1885 when the statute was repealed by an act providing for a state census to be taken that year.[6] For twenty years this law for the registration of vital statistics was on the statute books; but diligent inquiry fails to reveal any results which ever came from it, except a deep regret that it was not enforced.

In 1889 the city of Lincoln passed an ordinance requiring the registration of births and deaths, and since September of that year fairly complete death certificates have been returned because permits were necessary to secure burial in the city cemeteries. Moreover, the town was becoming large enough that the coroner felt called to insist upon this formality as a means of detecting crime. A few birth certificates are found for that year but the health officer failed to enforce the law and for ten years thereafter not a single birth entry is made. In 1901, influenced by a general agitation over the country for registration, the health officer made a spasmodic attempt to enforce the ordinance but only those physicians obeyed who believed in the desirability and necessity of such records.[7] The most faithful person to report was a woman doctor who handled many of the lying-in cases in the Russian German settlements, but almost fifty per cent. of these were treated by Russian German midwives who paid no attention to the ordinance and who were left unmolested.[8] Besides being incomplete, the birth records up to 1912 are unusable for comparative purposes unless the rural records are separated from the city records. To do this, a knowledge of the changes in the city

enforcement would have provided a mine of historical and social data for present use.

[5] *Complete Session Laws of Nebraska*, II, 848.

[6] *Laws of Nebraska*, 1885, 67–108.

[7] In 1903 Congress passed a resolution urging the states to enact suitable registration laws. Cf. *Congressional Record*, 57th Cong., 2d Sess.,

limits at various periods of the municipality's history is necessary.[9]

In 1905, the Nebraska Legislature passed a model Vital Statistics law which was first properly put into effect in Lincoln upon the reorganization of its Board of Health in 1912.[10] There are now on record, therefore, three years of fairly accurate and fairly complete birth and death certificates for the city, although there would have been nine if the law had been promptly enforced. The state, however, is still included (1914) in the list of commonwealths where "good birth registration laws have been enacted—although their enforcement does not yet meet the census requirements."[11] In 1909 the State Registrar of Vital Statistics was made the depositary of data on marriage and divorce, to whom annual reports are to be made by the county judge and Clerk of the District Court respectively.[12] This law has resulted in no more complete statistics in Lancaster County than were available before. Elaborate blanks containing between thirty and forty items are provided, but only such items are filled in as the marriage license or the petition for divorce happen to record. The divorce statistics are woefully deficient, not more than half the items being filled out, because attorneys have not been in the habit of including many of the points asked for, and the clerk's office has not taken the trouble to secure the information from the litigants.

[9] These corrections have been made in the figures used for the tables which follow.

[10] *Laws of Nebraska*, 1905, 466–471. The salient features of this act are (1) that the registration area covers the entire state, (2) that the birth and death certificates are made out according to the standard blanks adopted by the United States Census Bureau, (3) that all local registrars must make a report to the State Registrar, who makes a permanent record of the certificate, and (4) physicians and undertakers failing to report births and deaths are subject to a fine of $10 to $100, or to sixty days imprisonment, or to both.

[11] "Birth Registration, an Aid in Protecting the Lives and Rights of Children," United States Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, *Monograph*, number 1, 16. See also map of the United States on page 2, showing adequacy and inadequacy of birth registration laws in the various states. The Bureau of the Census, however, included the cities of Omaha and Lincoln in its registration area in 1911. Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, *Mortality Statistics*, 1911, 10.

[12] *Laws of Nebraska*, 1909, 347.

The question of the comparative number of divorces among the foreign-born and the native-born is interesting and important; but the nativity of the client is never recorded, and unless one knows the family names of foreign groups, there is no possible way of distinguishing.

No apology is made for this lengthy and somewhat tedious digression from the point at issue. Satisfactory studies of local, state, or national social conditions can never be forthcoming so long as our records are so carelessly and inadequately kept. "Sound vital statistics are the necessary basis of modern sanitation and register clearly the steps in the campaign against preventable diseases, often pointing the way to the next step. They furnish a definite measure of the value of sanitary improvements."[13] Moreover, it is a fact that the state's confidence is continually imposed upon, as any cursory examination of the records will show. Birth statistics are the most unreliable of all the unreliable vital statistics we have; yet the state fixes a legal age for school attendance, child labor, marriage, militia duty, and the suffrage and provides no way for unerringly establishing it. For example, a marriage certificate dated July 14, 1911, gave a bride's age as 18. A death certificate for this same woman August 8, 1912, gave her age as 16 years 9 months and 18 days. According to the latter and probably correct data, her age at marriage was 15 years 8 months and 23 days, or 3 months and 7 days below the age of parental consent in Nebraska. A young couple went from Lincoln to Council Bluffs and the marriage license issued to them gave the groom's age as 21. A year later he sued for divorce on the ground of fraud in forcing him to marry, and gave his age at that time as 20 years. A young man married in December, 1914, gave his age as 21, although in April of that year the census recorded him as 18. Misrepresentation by those desiring citizenship papers was not uncommon before the new naturalization law of 1906, especially in states which permitted alien suffrage; for where five years' residence was not re-

[13] Chaddock, "Sources of Information upon the Public Health Movement," in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. XXXVII, number 2, *The Public Health Movement*, 305.

Neighbors

quired, crowds of voters could be rounded up on short notice and the age of those ineligible could be conveniently stretched to suit the occasion. The care taken under the new law to establish the exact age of the applicant now results in a number of denials of citizenship on the ground that the declarant was under 21 years of age. Misrepresentation of age to school authorities is the most flagrant abuse locally and the Russian German is the chief sinner, not because he is primarily dishonest, but because the state through its neglect aids him in evading a law with which he is not in sympathy.

II. *Birth Rates*

It has been previously pointed out that every condition among the Russian Germans in Lincoln is favorable to a high birth rate. Although comprising less than one seventh of the total population of the city, the proportion of Russian German births to the total number of births in the city was 25.2 per cent. in 1912; 29.7 per cent. in 1913; and 32.3 per cent. in 1914.[14] The phenomenon of a decreasing native population of native parentage in a community where the foreigner is a comparatively recent comer is here demonstrated. The increase from one fourth to one third the total births does not mean that the birth rate among the Russian Germans is rising at that ratio but that the Russian German population increased more rapidly, through immigration, during these years than did the population of the city as a whole.

[14] *Birth Records of the City of Lincoln.* The degree to which the public health reports are deficient is shown by a comparison of the number of births recorded at the health office and the number of christenings in the various Russian German churches:

Year	Health Records	Church Christenings	Year	Health Records	Church Christenings
1902	46	134	1909	168	273
1903	61	168	1910	236	304
1904	63	188	1911	264	327
1905	76	198	1912	291	339
1906	99	220	1913	336	358
1907	139	291	1914	390	382
1908	150	278	Total...	2,319	3,460

Another measure of the natural increase of population is the crude birth rate; *i. e.*, the number of births per annum per 1,000 of the total population.

TABLE X. BIRTHS PER 1,000 TOTAL POPULATION[15]

Russian German,	1914	60.0
Russian German,	1910	60.8
Lincoln (total),	1910	25.1
Russia,	1910	44.2
Germany,	1910	30.5

The figures however do not show the actual fecundity of marriage among the Russian Germans because there is not the same proportion of women from 15 to 45 years among the Russian German and the city populations; nor is there the same proportion of married persons in the two groups. For example, 28 per cent. of the total population of Lincoln is composed of women between 15 and 45 years, while only 20 per cent. of the Russian German population are women of that age group.[16] Based upon the number of women between 15 and 45 years, the birth rate for the Russian Germans was 318.6 births per 1,000 and for the city of Lincoln 73.2 per 1,000. A similar comparison of the fecundity of marriage between native-born and foreign-born women in Michigan for the five-year period, 1890–1894, shows 111 births per 1,000 native, and 232 births per 1,000 foreign, women.[17]

[15] The data for 1914 are based upon the writer's census of the Russian Germans in that year. The Russian German population in 1910 is estimated from the United States Census as 5,000. The number of births is taken from the total christenings of the eight Russian German churches, which record 304 births in 1910 as compared with 236 registered at the health office. The former would not include a few births where families belong to other churches for the still births. Moreover, it might include some born outside the city, viz., in the beetfields, but these would be only a few. These facts illustrate, however, the impossibility of ascertaining an absolutely correct rate. The data for Lincoln are based on the United States Census for 1910, and the city health records, which latter are incomplete and make the rate appear lower than it should be. For Russia and Germany, see Statistical Abstract, 1913, 1914.

[16] Cf. Edin. D. Fisher, *Characteristics of Race Groups*, 36.

[17] Newsholme, *The Declining Birth-rate*, 65.

This enormous difference in Lincoln is due partly to the large number of unmarried women between these ages in the city at large and the small number among the Russian Germans. An unusually large proportion of single women in the schools, colleges, and university; the usual number of rural immigrants in business and industry; and the increasing number of women of leisure who delay marriage, reduce the proportion of married women between 15 and 45 years in the city to 54.7 per cent., while 80.0 per cent. of the Russian German women of this age are married.[18] Based upon the number of married women between 15 and 45 years, the birth rate for the Russian Germans is 399.1 births per 1,000 and for Lincoln at large, 134.1 per 1,000.[19] Unfortunately there is no way of separating the city rate which all the way through includes the Russian German and does not anywhere show comparative ratios between this foreign group and the native-born, nor between them and the rest of the city.

The potential size of the Russian German family may be ascertained by a study of the number of children born in those families in which the mother has passed the age of child-bearing. Out of 265 Russian German families in Lincoln in which the mother was 45 years and over, the following number of children had been born:

0 children in 18 families;	8 children in 26 families;
1 child in 3 families;	9 children in 37 families;
2 children in 9 families;	10 children in 40 families;
3 children in 4 families;	11 children in 32 families;
4 children in 8 families;	12 children in 16 families;
5 children in 12 families;	13 children in 10 families;
6 children in 21 families;	14 children in 5 families;
7 children in 21 families;	15 children in 3 families.

In 80 per cent. of these families, six or more children were

[18] Cf. *Table VIII, Conjugal Condition of the Population Over Fifteen Years, by Percentages, above*, 40.

[19] In the three years 1890–1892 the annual birth-rate for England was 264 per 1,000 wives. Newsholme, *The Elements of Vital Statistics*, 64.

born, and in 40 per cent. of the families, from ten to fifteen children.[20] The average number of births was 8.0 per family.[21]

The percentage of sterility among these 265 women was 6.8. The only rate with which this figure can be compared is that given in a study of the population of Massachusetts where, among married women from 50 to 59 years of age, 14.8 per cent. of the native-born were without children, and 9.3 per cent. of the foreign-born.[22]

In these same 265 families, the number of children living was as follows:

0 children in 19 families;	7 children in 27 families;
1 child in 16 families;	8 children in 23 families;
2 children in 20 families;	9 children in 11 families;
3 children in 29 families;	10 children in 2 families;
4 children in 46 families;	11 children in 2 families;
5 children in 37 families;	12 children in 1 family.
6 children in 32 families;	

According to this method of reckoning, there was an average of 4.7 children per family, or 6.6 persons as compared with 5.03 persons in the whole settlements. While in 80 per cent. of these families, six or more children had been born, in only 37 per cent. are six or more children living; and while in 40 per cent. ten or more had been born, in only 1.9 per cent. were ten or more living. In 34 families, 12 or more children had been born but in only one

[20] In one instance a man of 34 married a girl of 14, and in twenty-five years she bore him eleven children, of whom eight are living.

[21] The average number of children in the normal American family at the present time is slightly above two. See Ripley, "Race Progress and Immigration," in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, XXXIV, number 1, 135. In Russia in 1896 the number of births to ten marriages was 65 or 6.5 children per marriage. *New International Encyclopedia*, IX, 804. Tables showing the number of children born per marriage are given for various countries and groups of population in Newsholme, *The Elements of Vital Statistics*, 64–70. However, the method of computation is not known and hence the figures cannot be compared safely with those given above. Cf. also "The Fecundity of Immigrant Women," in *Reports of Immigration Commission*, XXVIII, 731–826.

[22] Kuczynski, "The Fecundity of the Native and Foreign Born Population in Massachusetts," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, XVI, 158.

family were 12 children living. There was a decrease through death of 3.3 children per family, or 41.2 per cent. of all who had been born.

The Russian German follows the European trend in natality, and in his birth rate and his marriage rate he is more an eighteenth century product of Germany than of any modern conditions. Thrown out upon the frontier of Europe a century and a half ago, like all pioneers, a part of his service was to multiply and replenish the steppes, and his German ancestry fitted him admirably for this task. In spite of border warfare, epidemics, famine, and slight emigration the population of the German colonies in less than a century showed ten times its original number.[23] They actually increased more rapidly than the native population because they were more protected, particularly from military service, which meant not merely the loss of individual men but of homes as well.

The birth rate, however, among the German colonists in Russia is not so high as it is for Russia as a whole, nor so high as it is among their immigrants in Lincoln. For five years (1907 to 1911 inclusive) the birth rate per 1,000 of the total population of Russia was 44.5.[24] The crude rate for the Protestant German colonies was 40.9 births per 1,000 in 1908 and 36.9 in 1912.[25] The latter shows the effect of three years' famine and emigration. According to this computation, the crude birth rate of the German colonists in Lincoln is about 20 more per 1,000 population than in Russia. This phenomenon of a higher crude birth rate among immigrants in America than in their native home finds a parallel among the inhabitants of the anthracite coal communities of Pennsylvania. These are mostly Slavs from Austria and Hungary where the birth rate is 38.6 and 44.0 respectively per 1,000 population. In Pennsylvania, in five parishes the birth rate was estimated at from 50.00 to 73.33 per 1,000.[26]

[23] Bauer, *Geschichte der deutschen Ansiedler an der Wolga*, 76.

[24] *Statesman's Year Book*, 1914.

[25] Computed from data in the *Friedensboten Kalender*, 1910 and 1914, printed in Talowka, *Government* Saratow, Russia.

[26] Roberts, *Anthracite Coal Communities*, 69–70.

this care, and often ungrateful children abuse their unaccustomed liberty by deserting their parents or leaving them to live alone. This is one of the especial grievances which the older people have against America, and which keeps some of them from joining their children here. When, therefore, the child comes to be considered an economic liability instead of an asset, and when he ceases to serve the purposes of an old age pension, the size of the family will automatically decrease.

Sex relations among the Russian Germans as revealed by the statistics of illegitimacy are remarkably pure, the ratio of illegitimate to each 100 births in the Protestant colonies on the Volga being an average of 1.4 for the years 1906, 1907 and 1908.[27] The rates for the European countries are unusually high and for the United States, very low. In 1890, Russia, which ranked among the lowest, had 3.1 illegitimate births out of each 100 births.[28] In 1886–1890, the illegitimate births ranged from 14.7 per 100 for Austria to 3.1 for Holland, with Germany showing 9.3 and Great Britain 4.8. On the other hand, Rhode Island in 1901 had 1.3 illegitimate per 100 total births, and in Connecticut, the rate was 1.1.[29] It is true that the statistics on this subject are difficult to interpret. The temptation to conceal these births is as great as, or greater than, the carelessness in reporting other births. Moreover, with the growth of medical science and the unrestrained practices of vicious doctors, criminal prevention plays a part unsuspected by the public and all too large. Where custom and law demand the immediate marriage of the guilty parties, the real conditions are concealed in the statistics which report all children born in wedlock as legitimate. But the comparative standards of Americans and Europeans, as shown in the statistics, are borne out by travelers who find a vast difference among people of every stratum of society—peasants, middle classes, university students, and social leaders.

The purity of the Russian German family life as shown by the low percentage of illegitimacy may be accounted for partially by the

[27] *Friedensboten Kalender*, 1908, 130; 1909, 131; 1910, 131.

[28] *New International Encyclopedia*, IX, 804.

[29] Bailey, *Modern Social Conditions*, 121.

low marriage age, the universality of marriage, and the great importance attaching to the wedding ceremony in the simple lives of the people. The impossibility of concealing their shame in the small villages in which they live is a deterrent, as is shown by the fact that in Saratow, a city of 200,000 population, where some 12,000 German colonists live, the number of illegitimate births per 100 among the latter was 5.8 in 1906; 7.6 in 1908; and 5.3 in 1912.[30] In the villages, public opinion is a most powerful preventive. Since marriage in Russia is an exclusively ecclesiastical institution, the minister must be appealed to for the ceremony; and if he learns of the indiscretion of the pair the bridal wreath is torn from the bride and their disgrace is heralded by their being denied a public wedding. The difficulty or impossibility of desertion by the father due to the lack of freedom of travel in Russia and the consequent necessity of being provided with a domestic passport by which he can easily be traced, is a restraining influence. The fact that illegitimacy would stand as a bar to marriage, in a community where the arrangements are largely in the hands of parents and the personal wishes of the contracting parties count for little, would also have its subtle influence.

As usual the woman is the chief sufferer and if she chance to be deserted or conceals her paramour, her lot becomes almost unendurable.[31] Not only is she shunned and despised by her associates, but she is jeered and howled at by the boys of the street, who constitute themselves the guardians of virtue, as much to their own debasement as to the edification of the accused. This custom is transferred to America and prevails in the settlements in Lincoln. A sixteen-year-old girl who had fallen victim to vice through the public dance hall was being accompanied to her home in the settlement on Sunday afternoon by the probation officer's assistant. On their way they passed through the city

[30] *Friedensboten Kalender*, 1908, 130; 1910, 131; 1914, 142.

[31] A writer in the *Volkszeitung*, a semi-weekly paper published in Saratow, describes the popular conduct toward such women and protests against the leniency shown the male culprit in contrast to the pitiless attitude toward the woman. This is one of the numerous signs that the "woman's movement" is penetrating even one of the most secluded cor-

park where a number of boys were lounging. Recognizing the girl but not knowing who her companion was, the boys began calling after her and followed her for some distance hurling vile epithets at her in the German tongue. For months this girl could not go outside her home without submitting to this same conduct from the boys in the neighborhood. The viaduct which separates the north settlement from the city is a *via dolorosa* to any girl who leaves the path of virtue; for here the boys gather and as she goes back and forth to her work, they taunt and tempt her in truly mediaeval fashion.[32]

How far the absolute parental control of matchmaking enters as a preventive of illegitimacy can only be conjectured, but there can be no question that it sometimes causes illicit relations between young people. Although the Russian law permits the minister to perform the marriage ceremony over the objection of the parents, the dependence of the youth upon their family, due to its patriarchal organization, induces them to find some way of escape without breaking its ties. Several instances are known in Lincoln where parents objected to the choice of their child, and the couple checkmated them, not by elopement, as is customary in America, but by assuming prematurely the privileges of the married state. In one case the parents, upon confession of the young people, prepared the ordinary wedding, and concealed the facts from the minister until afterwards.

Apparently this purity in the sexual relations has been the

[32] One of the most effective methods of punishment among the Russian Germans is "shame." However, since the community must act in the capacity of "hangman," it is a question whether more harm than good does not result from this primitive method of meting out justice, particularly when children are employed. An instance of this sort of punishment is given by a correspondent in the *Dakota Freie Presse*, December 27, 1910. A man and his wife in one of the colonies were caught stealing provisions from a neighbor. The customary legal penalties were imposed upon the man; but the woman was taken to the school grounds where she was made to stand with a link of the stolen sausage around her neck and a little cooking-kettle on her arm, while the school children danced about her in a circle and cried, "Wurst, Wurst," "Kalbas, Kalbas." The woman was then led through the entire village, followed by the children "with ear-splitting cries."

result of forces without as much as of forces within; for when the people come to America, they succumb in a certain degree to a lower standard because of the removal of restraints. Here it is easy for the young man to "skip out" as soon as trouble overtakes him. In this intention he is seldom hindered, and once in a while an innocent victim is forced by the law, or through fear of it, to pay the price another owed. As a rule, however, marriage results, as is shown by the fact that in fifteen years, only two illegitimate births among Russian German girls have been reported. But in all too many cases a birth record follows too soon after a marriage license. The fact that marriage in America is a civil ceremony and that it can be performed without the guilty subjecting themselves to the searching eye of the minister, furnishes a way of escaping one result of their misdeeds. For this reason there is always suspicion among the Russian Germans attaching to those who resort to the civil authorities for marriage.

One of the worst features in connection with these cases in America is the ease with which they can escape the consequences of their sin by appealing to unscrupulous physicians. Instead of advising immediate marriage, the girl is instructed in the art of murder and if she takes this advice she is quite as effectively disgraced in the eyes of her people as though she had born a child out of wedlock. Moreover, the responsibility of the couple for their misdeeds is so lightly thrown off in this way that instead of being warned for the future, they are made more reckless. It is impossible for the best informed persons to tell exactly how many of such cases occur in the Russian German settlements; for sometimes the true nature of the illness is concealed or, again, imaginative neighbors saddle their suspicions upon an innocent girl. But the fact is that girls are here thrown out into industry and meet temptations of which they have never been warned because their mothers know nothing of them. Naturally, some of them go astray; the larger per cent. of these marry; a few of the remainder hide their shame in our state institution, but more seek release through the aid of unprincipled doctors.

III. *Death Rates*

We have seen that one third of the total births of the city are of Russian German parentage, although that people constitute but one seventh of the population; that the proportion in the city is gradually increasing; and that the birth rate is abnormally high due to the age distribution of the immigrants and to favorable economic conditions. As usual a high infant mortality accompanies the high birth rate, and presents a much more vital problem to the city because it is one over which society has some direct control.

So far as the crude death rate among the Russian Germans in Lincoln is concerned it is commendably low, being 11.0 deaths per 1,000 of their population in 1914 or, exclusive of still births, 9.5 per 1,000. In 1911, the lowest death rates in the registration states of the United States were 10.5 in Minnesota and 8.9 in Washington.[33] Unfortunately there is no way of accurately finding the death rate of Lincoln in 1914; but estimating the population at 45,000, the death rate would be 12.1 per 1,000.[34] The city has long claimed a low mortality based partly on incomplete returns, although there is every condition locally, such as age distribution, occupation, density of population, climate, and physical and social conditions, to encourage a low rate.

As compared with the rest of the city, the death rate of the Russian Germans varies little from the proportion which they constitute of the whole population. They comprise from 12 to 14 per cent. of the total inhabitants of the city, and in 1912, 14.3 per cent. of the total number of deaths were Russian German; in 1913, 12.3 per cent.; and in 1914, 12.2 per cent.[35] While they do

[33] Bureau of the Census, *Mortality Statistics*, 1911, 12. The death rate for Russia, 1901–1905, was 30.9 per 1,000. *Idem*, 13. In 1912 the death rate for the Volga Protestant colonies was approximately 19 per 1,000. See *Friedensboten Kalender*, 1914.

[34] The crude death rate for the registration area of the United States in 1911 was 14.2 (exclusive of still births). Bureau of the Census, *Mortality Statistics*, 1911, 9.

[35] The effect of the foreign population of a city upon the mortality rates is frequently to raise them; for instance, in Boston the death rate in 1900 was raised 3.14 per 1,000 as the net effect of its foreign population.

not show any great difference in either the crude death rate or the proportion of total deaths in the city, they do show great differences in the number of deaths according to age distribution. It is to be assumed that where there is a large proportion of children or of old people, the expectancy of death will be greater than where the middle age groups constitute the bulk of the population. In so far, however, as infant mortality, *i. e.*, the death of children under one year of age, or child mortality, *i. e.*, the death of children from one to four years inclusive, occur from preventable causes, the community cannot find much comfort in that general rule.

The following table shows the age distribution of the two populations and the proportion of deaths according to those ages:

TABLE XI. DEATHS AMONG RUSSIAN GERMANS AND IN THE CITY AT LARGE, ACCORDING TO AGE DISTRIBUTION

Age Groups	Percentage of Russian German Population, 1914	Percentage Russian German Deaths			Average	Percentage of Lincoln Population, 1910	Percentage Lincoln Deaths			Average
		1912	1913	1914			1912	1913	1914	
0–1 years	4.0	37.2	45.1	61.1	47.8	2.1	21.0	22.9	23.0	22.4
1–4 years	17.9	27.9	23.1	23.6	24.9	7.8	7.5	7.4	7.0	7.3
5–19 years	33.2	6.9	4.9	2.8	4.9	24.3	8.5	5.9	5.5	6.6
20–49 years	37.3	15.1	14.7	7.0	12.2	50.6	25.5	23.9	21.2	23.5
over 50 years	7.6	12.9	12.2	5.5	10.2	15.2	37.5	39.9	43.3	40.2
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

It is unfortunate that the percentages relating to Lincoln cannot be reckoned as to its inhabitants excluding Russian Germans, but the United States census does not furnish the necessary basis. The table shows that, in proportion to the total number of deaths, the largest percentage among the Russian Germans occurs in the lower age groups; and for the city at large, in the upper age groups.[36] For example among the former, the percentage of

Cf. Davis, "The Relation of the Foreign Population to the Mortality Rates of Boston," in *Medical Problems of Immigration*, 51.

[36] The figures upon which these percentages are based include the still

deaths under five years of age was 65.1, 68.2, and 84.7 of the total number respectively for the three years, or an average of 72.7 per cent.; while for the city at large it was 28.5, 30.1, and 30.0, or 29.7 per cent.[37] The proportion of deaths over fifty years of age is much lower for the Russian Germans than for the city at large; while in the middle age groups, where mortality should be the lowest, the rate for the city at large is almost twice the proportions for the immigrants.

These figures are significant only as one keeps in mind the age distribution of the two groups. Of the Russian German population, 21.9 per cent. are under five years of age, while only 9.9 per cent. of the population of the city fall within that age group. On the other hand, the city has many more elderly people than has the Russian German and many of these deaths in the city are of persons over sixty years of age. The age distribution of the Russian Germans is such, then, as to warrant a greater expectancy of death than in the city at large, particularly in the lower age groups.[38] The real question and the one of social significance is whether or not any considerable number of these deaths are preventable.

The large proportion of deaths under one year of age among the Russian Germans argues, at first glance, for a high infant mortality rate; but such is not actually the case. The proportion of infant deaths (exclusive of still births) per 1,000 living births for the three years, 1912–1914, has been as follows:[39]

[37] The infant and child mortality among the Slavs of the Pennsylvania coal fields was 70 per cent. of the total deaths, while the English-speaking children formed 40.7 per cent. of the entire mortality. Roberts, *Anthracite Coal Communities*, 79.

[38] If the figures were available it would be possible to compute the death rates for each age group and thus show exactly the comparison in healthfulness between the two populations. See Bailey, *Modern Social Conditions*, 216–220.

[39] The proportion of still births is also lower for the Russian Germans than for the city at large, being in 1914, 2.8 per 100 for the former and 3.4 for the latter. The same fact was found to be true among the foreign women in Pennsylvania, where 17 to 20 per cent. of the still births were among Slav mothers, and 68 to 80 per cent. among English-speaking mothers. Roberts, *Anthracite Coal Communities*, 81.

TABLE XII. NUMBER OF DEATHS UNDER ONE YEAR PER 1,000 LIVING BIRTHS FOR LINCOLN AS A WHOLE, FOR LINCOLN EXCLUSIVE OF THE RUSSIAN GERMANS, AND FOR THE RUSSIAN GERMANS, 1912–1914

Year	Lincoln (Total)			Lincoln (Exclusive of Russian Germans)			Russian Germans		
	Number Living Births	Number Infant Deaths	Infant Mortality Rate	Number Living Births	Number Infant Deaths	Infant Mortality Rate	Number Living Births	Number Infant Deaths	Infant Mortality Rate
1912	1,161	85	73.2	822	62	75.4	339	23	67.0
1913	1,110	112	100.9	752	91	121.0	358	29	81.0
1914	1,168	97	83.0	786	61	77.6	382	36	94.2
Average.....			85.7			91.3			80.7

The statistics will be found to differ greatly between the various groups, and also within each group; while the period covered is so limited and the figures are so small, comparatively, that it is difficult to formulate any general rule. Especially is this hazardous because of the incompleteness of the records. One fact, however, is clear and of vital importance: the infant mortality rate among the Russian Germans does not differ vitally from the same rate in the remainder of the city, and the Russian German infant has about the same chance to grow out of babyhood into childhood as does the average child in the city. This fact is particularly significant locally because, for some years, the impression has prevailed in the community that there is an abnormally high infant and child mortality in the Russian German settlements as compared with the city at large. The statistics, however, do not bear out this supposition.

It is true that the community is more conscious of the infant mortality among the immigrants because it is localized; *e. g.*, in 1914, 36 infant deaths out of a total of 97, or almost one third, occurred among the Russian Germans, and most of these were within the settlements.[40] But practically one third of the total number of births occurred among the same people; and naturally, where the births are, there must be the infant mortality, also.

However, it is undoubtedly true that the infant mortality rate

[40] In the discussion of vital statistics, the figures for the Russian Germans include the entire city, and not merely the residents of the two settlements as in the case of housing conditions previously discussed.

of the entire city is larger than it should be, or than it need be if proper means were taken to reduce it. It is difficult to say just how far this could be done, or what would be a reasonable standard to set. The average rate in Lincoln of 85.7 for three years is certainly not high compared with the estimated rate of 124.0 for the United States as a whole, or with some of the American cities as shown in the following list:[41]

Johnstown, Pa.	55,000	134
Malden, Mass.	44,000	90
Springfield, Ill.	51,000	130
Wichita, Kans.	52,000	102
South Bend, Ind.	53,000	182
Omaha, Nebr.	124,000	126
Grand Rapids, Mich.	112,000	122
Los Angeles, Cal.	319,000	97
Indianapolis, Ind.	233,000	123
Kansas City, Mo.	248,000	154
Seattle, Wash.	237,000	82

But conditions in these places may vary widely from each other and from circumstances in Lincoln. Here there are broad streets, spacious yards, few tenements, and only a small manufacturing population. Every outward encouragement for a low infant mortality exists, and no community is absolved which has any appreciable amount of preventable waste of human life.

In New Zealand, a country whose history and conditions are not unlike some of our western states, remarkable progress has been made in reducing infant mortality from a rate which was comparatively low to begin with. In ten years (1902–1912) the infant mortality rate for the country as a whole was lowered from

[41] For statistics relating to cities of 100,000 population and over, see Bureau of the Census, *Mortality Statistics*, 1911. For the infant mortality rates of Johnstown and Malden see Duke, "Infant Mortality, Results of a Field Study in Johnstown, Pa.," Children's Bureau, *Infant Mortality Series*, No. 3. For the data concerning the remaining cities, chosen on account of similarity in size and conditions to Lincoln, I am indebted to Miss Julia Lathrop, Chief of the Children's Bureau. The figures represent the infant mortality rate for 1908–1912, for which period

83 per 1,000 births to 51, while the rate for Dunedin, a city the size of Lincoln, declined from 89 to 38 deaths per 1,000 births.[42] The fact that so large a proportion numerically of the infant deaths in Lincoln are in a definite locality and that the causes producing them are fairly uniform makes the matter easier to handle.

The first requisite in solving the problem is a knowledge of the exact causes which result in the death of so many children. This is not an easy thing to find out even in so small a place as Lincoln. So many factors enter into the problem that it becomes an exceedingly complex one in spite of the simple terms to which statistics apparently reduce it.[43] There are a few diseases which account for most of the deaths among infants and children, but the conditions which produce these diseases are greatly varied. They can probably be summed up in the two words "dirt" and "ignorance," but these factors result in things other than infant mortality, and, moreover, they are doubtless the basis of nine tenths of all the diseases to which human flesh is heir. If the specific forms of dirt and ignorance which cause the death of so many children can be discovered it will help in the early solution of the problem. Everywhere at present, statistics show that diarrhoeal diseases are one of the three main causes for infant mortality. The occurrence of these diseases "depends, wholly or partly, upon surrounding temperature and deficiency of rainfall, upon urban and social conditions, and upon pollution of food, chiefly milk, or other articles intimately associated with the life of infants."[44] To combat this one disease is no simple matter. The importance of a pure milk supply has been emphasized and much has been done in the larger cities by way of milk stations,

[42] See "New Zealand Society for the Health of Women and Children, an Example of Methods of Baby-saving Work in Small Towns and Rural Districts," published by the United States Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, *Infant Mortality Series*, number 2, Bureau pub. number 6.

[43] A casual perusal of the addresses at the annual meetings of the American Association for the Study and Prevention of Infant Mortality convinces the layman of the degree of specialization necessary in coping with the problem, and that here also "doctors disagree."

but artificial feeding is not a factor in the infant mortality of the Russian German settlements in Lincoln, for this practice is almost unknown among these foreign mothers. This reduces the problem of a pure milk supply to a minimum, particularly since many of the people keep their own cows which they pasture on the edge of the settlement, and which supply themselves and their neighbors with fresh milk.[45]

The bad effect of midwifery upon the infant mortality rate is often alleged, and it is true that the Russian Germans employ these women very largely. In 1914, 201 of the 390 births reported among these foreigners were attended by midwives, and only 186 by physicians.[46] According to the health records the work of the midwives is increasing, although this is probably only apparent, due to the fact that they have not been held strictly to account in reporting births until very recently. There are six or eight of these Russian German women, all of whom are untrained and who have no legal or professional standing in the community. Nevertheless the sum total of their work in the foreign settlements redounds to the good, rather than to the harm, of their patients. They are, as a rule, cleanly in their habits, as is evidenced by the fact that puerperal septicaemia practically never results from their work. Besides they do not attend infectious cases as do the regular physicians, who not infrequently transmit infection in this way. They are more patient and careful than the doctors who "treat the people like dogs," in the words of one of the physicians themselves. Their fees are low, averaging from $5 to $8 a case and, in addition to the technical services they perform, they nurse

[45] Several years ago an attempt was made to check the infant mortality in the settlements by the establishment of a pure milk station in the ward school building. During two months' existence only one call was received (and that largely from curiosity) although milk from the University Experiment Station was furnished at less than cost. The plan failed, not because the people were too stubborn, or too ignorant, or too heartless regarding their children to receive the proffered help, but because it did not meet the need in solving their problem.

[46] From 30 to 85 per cent. of the deliveries of infants in large cities are in the hands of these women. Newmayer, "The Warfare against Infant Mortality," in *The Public Health Movement, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, XXXVII, number 2, 205.

the patient and do the work about the house. Of the same speech, sex, and faith as those whom they attend, their services are of much more value to the mothers than are those of the majority of the doctors who commonly practice in the settlements, unless it can be shown that actual harm results from their work. The testimony of competent and sympathetic physicians, of the health authorities, and of the statistics so far as they reveal the facts, does not disclose such results.

It is unfortunate that no attempt is made by the state to recognize the midwives and to raise their status. This cannot be done by passing arbitrary laws shutting them out of practice, for this would do more harm than good by depriving the immigrant of any medical attention except the help volunteered by neighbors. It would also increase the difficulty of securing birth registrations; for the number of Russian German midwives is a practically stable quantity and the authorities can keep an eye on them, while it would be almost impossible to ferret out the unattended births in the settlement. But the state could demand the registration of midwives,[48] it could fix a certain reasonable standard to which all should conform, and it could provide some means of education whereby this useful class of medical attendants might become a positive means of good.[49]

[47] The Russian German midwives employ many customs belonging to the folk medicine of the German villages. For instance, they will not allow the mother to go to sleep, nor will they give her cold water to drink. They wash the new born child's eyes with milk and place a cloth wet with whisky on its head. As a rule, these practices are harmless, based purely on superstition; but the people have much more confidence in their potency than in modern medical science.

[48] See Wile, "Immigration and the Midwife Problem," in *Medical Problems of Immigration*, 119–125, and Schwartz, "Prenatal Care," in *Transactions of the Fourth Annual Meeting of the American Association*

The large size of the families must have its effect upon infant and child mortality, not only by depriving the children of the necessary care, but often by weakening the mother, and indirectly the child, through overproduction. As a rule, however, to counteract these evils, two years intervene between births, and the period of child-bearing is extended over a longer time. It is common to find women past forty who have young babes, and some even past forty-five. Out of 75 Russian German women over forty years of age, 50 had children living who were born since the mothers had reached forty years; while doubtless some had borne children who are now deceased—a fact which the census did not show. Of these 75 women, 7 had given birth to children at forty-four; 3 at forty-five; 3 at forty-six; and one at forty-seven. This prolonged period of child-bearing means that often a woman is a grandmother before all her own children have come; and it means that her whole life, after marriage, is engrossed with children and children's children.

Another factor indirectly increasing infant mortality, and child mortality as well, is the effect of the voyage to America. This would be felt especially in the three years, 1912–1914, on account of the heavy immigration of that period. Of the children of one year of age or under who died in 1912, six were born in Russia or on the way to America; in 1913, four under the age of one, and five between the ages of one and five; and in 1914, three under one, and two under five years of age. The figures do not tell the whole story, however, for not infrequently a Russian German mother buries her baby at sea or in some foreign land where the family was detained at an emigrant station. Not merely the effect of the hardships of the voyage upon the child itself, but the general conditions surrounding the family in its new environment in America would tend to make themselves felt in

tures was provided for them, and meanwhile the office sent to Germany for copies of a standard book on obstetrical work. Each woman bought a copy, and lessons are now assigned which they study and discuss at their regular meetings. The sessions are faithfully attended, intelligent interest is shown, and the midwives without exception express their appreciation

an increased death rate. The poverty and overcrowding incident to the life of the raw immigrant and the homesickness and hard work of the mother must necessarily affect her physically and mentally. If figures were available, they would undoubtedly show that infant and child mortality decreases with the length of residence in America, even though the birth rate remains the same for a generation.

The direct causes for death assigned in the death certificates are not always reliable; and moreover, as has been stated, one needs to know the causes for the disease itself before a remedy can be suggested. Frequently the secondary cause of death is the one to be guarded against, *e. g.,* measles seldom prove fatal but pneumonia following measles is a common cause of death in children. The health records for the years 1912 to 1914 inclusive, show the following attributed causes for death among the Russian German children under five years of age:

TABLE XIII. DISTRIBUTION OF DEATHS OF RUSSIAN GERMAN CHILDREN UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE AND FROM ONE TO FIVE YEARS (EXCLUSIVE), ACCORDING TO PRIMARY CAUSE

Cause of Death	Infant Mortality (Under One Year)			Per Cent. of Total Infant Mortality	Child Mortality (From One to Five Years)			Per Cent. of Total Child Mortality
	1912	1913	1914		1912	1913	1914	
All causes.....	23	29	36	88	24	19	17	60
Respiratory diseases..	6	10	6	25.0	12	6	3	35.0
Diarrhoeal diseases...	4	11	9	27.4	7	5	6	30.0
Congenital debility. Premature birth....	11	4	15	34.0	..	1	1	3.3
Accident.....	..	..	..	0.0	1	1	2	6.7
Other causes (13).....	2	4	6	13.6	4	6	5	25.0

The diseases producing infant mortality fall into three groups, the largest number being due to the perils attending birth, such as prematurity, malformation, inanition, etc., which are largely ante-natal in their origin.[50] Enteritis and pneumonia are the two other principal causes for deaths of babies during the first year. Among children from one to five years, pneumonia demands the

[50] Thirty per cent. of all the infant deaths in England are due to this same cause. Newman, *Infant Mortality*, 62.

greatest toll, with enteritis closely following, while contagious diseases, chiefly diphtheria, and accidents form an appreciable factor.

It is significant to note that the diseases producing infant mortality in the foreign settlements in Lincoln are in general the same as elsewhere. In Newman's exhaustive study of the subject in England the fatal diseases of infancy are shown to be: wasting diseases, 31 per cent. of the total; diarrhoeal, 21 per cent., and respiratory, 16 per cent.;[51] while in the intensive study made in Johnstown, Pa., by the Children's Bureau, these diseases claimed 27, 26, and 25 per cent. respectively of the total infant mortality.[52] In the Russian German settlements in Lincoln, the proportion for these diseases in the same order as stated is 32.9, 27.2, and 25.0 per cent.[53]

Even after this analysis is made, the core of the matter is not touched; for positive and accurate information can result only from the tracing of each individual case, and intelligent action on the part of the community can come only after such a study has been made for the entire city. It is certain, however, that the causes for infant and child mortality are both social and individual; and that the community has it in its power through sanitation and education to reduce materially the number of such deaths. So far as sanitation is concerned the Russian Germans have done nearly all in their power to improve their living conditions, and no great change can occur until the city gives to the settlements better drainage of streets and alleys and removes the garbage deposits from their midst. How much harm results from water standing in cellars of the homes where there is no drainage, cannot be said; and though it is probably never the direct cause of death, it undoubtedly lowers the vitality of those who live in such

[51] Newman, *Infant Mortality*, 45.

[52] Duke, "Infant Mortality, Results of a Field Study in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, Based on Births in One Calendar Year," 37, in United States Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, *Infant Mortality Series*, number 3, Bureau pub. number 9.

[53] The registration area for the United States shows the same order for the diseases producing infant mortality. Bureau of the Census, *Mor-*

houses. However cleanly the homes, the people cannot escape the effects of odors from undrained sewage and pools of stagnant water, piles of manure and garbage heaps thrust upon them by the city, nor the more direct effect of well water contaminated by seepage through such polluted soil.

Probably an important cause for infant mortality (and child mortality, as well) over which the individual has control, is lack of protection against cold. The immigrant coming from Russia finds here a climate much milder than the one to which he has been accustomed and underestimates its effect upon the weak. The children are not warmly enough clothed; the houses are not kept sufficiently and evenly heated, while crowded conditions often subject the child to sudden changes of temperature. It is not unusual for mothers to take small babies to the church when the building has not been ventilated or heated and to sit through a long service when the temperature within the house is colder and damper than without. Particularly is this true of week-day services, such as funerals, when there is no one at home with whom to leave the child.

The Russian German mothers, as a rule, are not "grossly inexperienced or negligent in the care of their children." The majority of them spent their childhood caring for babies and the care of children comes second nature to them in spite of their youth at marriage. The young married women seldom go out to work either in organized industry or in the homes, and thus the care of their infants is not shifted upon some one else. The neglect of children is most apt to occur where the family is large and demands the mother's work away from home, and where the care of the younger children falls to the lot of the older ones or possibly to aged or infirm grandparents. Thus, contrary to the general rule, it is usually the later born who suffer neglect more than the first born, and the older babies instead of those under one year of age.

The Russian German mother as a rule is healthy in body and mind, and is contented and happy in rearing her family. Her children are not unwelcomed as is sometimes the case elsewhere, and her interests are usually narrowed down to the individual

care of them. Her ambition sometimes gets the better of her judgment and sends her out to wash and scrub when the children would be as well off with fewer clothes and more personal care; but this applies more to children who have reached school age, than to the younger ones. The mother's chief failure, as with most mothers, comes through ignorance of elementary but important hygienic principles. The existence of a simple family diet may not save the small child from being fed things that are hurtful and fatal to it. Irregularity of feeding does more harm than unclean or improper foods. The customary dependence on home remedies tempts the family to delay calling medical help until every other means is exhausted, and this often proves too late to save the baby, as is not infrequently noted by the physician on the certificate of death. This attitude of mind results also in the use of patent medicines and liquor which, as a rule, is kept in the home "as a medicine." The general principles of hygiene in its relation to infant welfare are largely an intuition with the Russian German mother. The houses are, as a rule, kept cool in the summer, not because she knows the scientific effect of heat upon infant mortality, but because she has been accustomed to cooking outside. Sometimes where the summer kitchen is lacking, women will be found doing the cooking over an open fire in the yard to save heating the kitchen.

Definite education of the women and girls would undoubtedly accomplish results in a comparatively short time. The raw immigrant mothers could be reached through the midwives if these were properly instructed; while others might be helped through visiting nurses.[54] The girls are being better prepared by the teaching of hygiene in the grade schools, and further specialized instruction is possible through special clubs and other existing organizations. The movement for "Little Mother's Clubs" is good in principle but unfortunate in the name chosen. It is too suggestive of relieving the proper agent of care and of placing responsibility upon those not physically or mentally mature

[54] At present (June, 1915) the city jointly with the Charity Organization Society and the Board of Education employs a visiting nurse who gives a large proportion of her time to work in the settlements

enough to bear it. Aside from the definite results to be accomplished through better sanitation and through the education of mothers, whatever tends to improve social conditions in the community will make itself felt in lowering the number of deaths of infants and small children. Education, however, will not be properly effective until the Russian Germans are taught how unnecessary are the deaths of many of their children. They have been accustomed to great epidemics of children's diseases which carry off, in some years, several hundred out of a single colony. No such event has ever happened in this country, and the gradual decrease of the child population as it occurs in Lincoln does not arouse them to any feeling of alarm. Only when they begin to feel that it is not entirely the "divine will" that their children die, but that they have some control over the matter, will they do their fair share in eliminating the preventable waste of child life.

To sum up the question of death rates among the Russian Germans in Lincoln, we have seen that for these people as a whole they are about the same as for the city at large, or somewhat lower. The largest percentage falls upon children under five years of age, but according to the number of births, the infant mortality is a trifle lower for the Russian German than for the whole city. Undoubtedly it might be quickly reduced by ascertaining the definite causes; but better sanitation by the municipal authorities and education through visiting nurses and through the school will tend to the same end, though more slowly.

IV. *Marriage*

It has been pointed out that under the favorable economic and social conditions prevailing in Lincoln, the crude birth rate of the Russian Germans is increased over that which exists in the German colonies in Russia, and that the death rate is decreased. The variance noted in these physical processes of birth and death is still more pronounced in relation to marriage, which responds with greater readiness to outward conditions.

The exact degree of change in the marriage rate cannot be given, but only approximated. From April, 1913, to April, 1914,

there were seventy marriages among the Russian Germans in Lincoln, giving a rate of 10.7 marriages or 21.4 persons married per 1,000 population. In 1910, there were fifty-four marriages, a rate of 10.8 marriages or 21.6 persons per 1,000.[55] These two rates, while corresponding almost exactly, are the results of entirely different local circumstances. The number of marriages in the first instance was the highest ever reached among the Russian Germans in Lincoln; while in 1910, the number was at the lowest ebb in a nine years' period. Representing, therefore, two entirely different sets of circumstances which yet produce practically the same result, these figures may be taken as the average marriage rate among Russian Germans in the city.

In the Protestant German colonies on the Volga, the marriage rate during a six-year period ranged from 10.6 persons to 15.0 persons per 1,000 of the population. The approximate rates for the various years were as follows:[56]

1906	15.0 persons per 1,000 population
1907	13.2 persons per 1,000 population
1908	13.3 persons per 1,000 population
1912	10.6 persons per 1,000 population

It will be noted that there is less difference between the highest and lowest rate in the colonies than there is between the former and the average rate in Lincoln; and also that the average rate in the city is more than twice the lowest rate in the colonies. Thus, the marriage rate of the Russian Germans rises greatly under the favorable living conditions in Lincoln.

Before discussing the specific causes for this change, it will be profitable to compare this marriage rate with those prevailing in some other countries, and in certain parts of, or groups of population in, the United States.[57]

[55] *Record of Marriage Licenses in Lancaster County, Nebraska.*

[56] Compiled from the *Friedensboten Kalender*, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1914.

[57] The statistics for the European States, except Russia, and for New England are taken from Bailey, *Modern Social Conditions*, 137. For Nebraska and Lancaster County, see Nebraska State Board of Health, *Bulletins*, 1912-1915. Cf. Roberts, *Anthracite Coal Communities*, 60, for

PERSONS MARRIED PER 1,000 TOTAL POPULATION

Europe:		
Hungary	1900	17.7
Germany	1900	17.0
England and Wales	1900	16.0
Ireland	1900	9.6
Russia	1902–1906	17.8
United States:		
New England	1893–1897	17.5
Nebraska	1910–1913	18.3
Lancaster County	1910–1913	28.6
Anthracite Coal Towns of Pennsylvania	1899–1901	24.0
Russian Germans in Lincoln	1910, 1913	21.5

The marriage rate for the Russian Germans is decidedly in advance of the rates for the European countries or for the United States. The rate for Lancaster county is raised to unusual proportions by out-of-town "trade." The fact that it is the capital city brings many young people here for their marriage ceremony, particularly during the state fair which occurs in the late summer. Hence this rate needs to be refined before it can be used for purposes of comparison.

The fact that two immigrant groups so vastly different as the Slav miners in Pennsylvania and the Russian Germans in Lincoln, Nebraska, present the same phenomenon of an increased marriage rate in the United States, suggests the probability of this being a general law. The marriage rate for Hungary, one of the highest of any of the European States, is 17.7; but the Slavs in Pennsylvania have a rate of 24.0. In the Protestant colonies on the Volga, the marriage rate is about 17.8; while among the Russian Germans in Lincoln, it rises to 21.5.

Various conditions are favorable to this high marriage rate among the Russian Germans in Lincoln. Among the first of these is an equal distribution of the sexes due to their almost universal custom of emigrating by families. The age distribution, on the other hand, is not such as to encourage a high marriage rate, for, as we have noted, a comparatively small number

the data concerning the Slavs. For Russia, see Webb, *New Dictionary of Statistics*, &c.

of young people are found in the settlements. Therefore, if the marriage rate were to be computed according to the number of single persons of marriageable age, the difference between the Russian Germans and the surrounding population would be much more marked.[58] In spite of the lack of young persons among the foreigners, the almost universal tendency of the widowed to remarry helps to raise the rate to its unusual height.

The economic laws which affect the marriage rate in general in all countries scarcely operate within the Russian German settlements in Lincoln. It is a general principle that "the marriage rate falls in hard times and rises on the recurrence of prosperity."[59] But in so far as it can be computed for this foreign group, it follows the curve of immigration more closely than it does the rise or fall in prosperity, and often quite contrary to it. Hence, the first or second year following each high tide of immigration has always shown an increase in the marriage rate beyond the proportionate increase in population.

The years from 1892 to 1894 inclusive are the first and most striking example of this fact. Up to 1891, as has been previ-

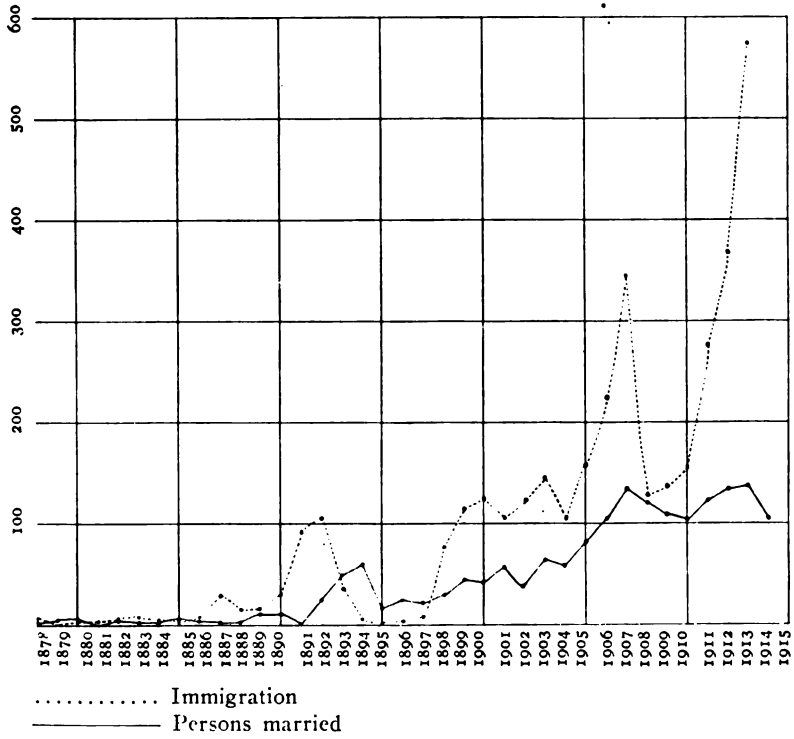
[58] In a comparative study of marriage rates among the native and foreign born in Massachusetts, a vast difference was found between the two, but this was much reduced by comparing the ages of the two populations. Thus, in the years 1887–1889, the marriage rate was as follows:

	Persons per 1,000 Population	Rate Corrected for Age Distribution
Natives	16.6	15.5
Foreign born	30.9	26.9
Entire State	20.5	18.6

The large number of adults and the small number of children among eastern immigrants apparently raises the rate to an enormous figure, which is much reduced by correcting the rate for age distribution. Cf. Kuczynski, "The Fecundity of the Native and Foreign Born Population in Massachusetts," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, XVI, 1–36, 141–186. A similar correction for the Russian German population in Lincoln, however, would raise the marriage rate instead of lowering it, because the age distribution of the two foreign groups is the direct opposite.

[59] For a summary of the principles governing the movement of the marriage rate, see Howard, *General Sociology, an Analytical Reference Syllabus*, 27; also Mayo-Smith, *Statistics and Sociology*, 93, 100–101; and Bailey,

CHART III. Number of Russian Germans Married in Lancaster County, 1878–1914, Compared with Immigration Wave



ously shown, many of the immigrants were either young, single men who came alone or families containing such youth as would soon be eligible to army service. The excessive number of males of marriageable age in proportion to the Russian German population must result either in mixed alliances or, for the more conservative, in deferring marriage. Meanwhile the immigrants were becoming established in industry and prosperous enough to set up homes of their own. When, therefore, in 1891 and 1892 a large immigration resulted from the famine in Russia, the marriages reached an average of 22 per annum during the years of 1892, 1893, and 1894. At a liberal estimate of 500 for the Russian German population of the city it would mean an annual rate during these "hard times," of 44 marriages or 88 per 1,000 population.[60] Again, the year 1907 was one of financial depression but it followed the heavy immigration of 1906–1907 and registered the largest number (67) of Russian German weddings ever recorded in the county in one calendar year.

The Russian German in Lincoln is less susceptible to the influence of prosperity upon the marriage rate than is the American, because what are considered poor times in America would be good times in Russia. The principle operates most truly when the standard of living is high or when the line between affluence and poverty is so slight that the loss of a crop or two reduces many families from comparative comfort to absolute privation. This latter is what occurs in the German colonies in Russia, where the marriage rate is so keenly sensitive to harvest conditions that newspaper correspondents invariably remark upon the connection between the two facts.[61] The dearth of marriages is also more noticeable there because the period when weddings occur is limited to one season of the year, and greater social prominence is laid upon them. Moreover, there is so little diversification of industry that a poor harvest settles the matter finally for every one. Among the Russian Germans in America, on the other hand, the prospect of a "job" in some of the unskilled avenues

[60] This reminds one of the shipment of maidens to the Virginia colony in

of labor, and the comparative prosperity of the immigrant even in times of financial stress, keep hope alive and encourage them to carry out their plans in spite of temporary conditions. Those who have lived here longer, however, and have a higher standard of living, similar to the American element, are more susceptible to the general principle controlling the marriage rate.[62]

In the age at which they marry, the Russian Germans of Lincoln differ decidedly from the American population. They marry earlier in life; there is less range in the marriage age; and the women of certain classes seem to marry younger in America instead of older as one would expect to find. Of 730 Russian German brides of the first marriage, 60.0 per cent. were married between the ages of 18 and 20, while the ages of all ranged only from 16 to 38.[63] Of 722 Russian German grooms, 59.9 per cent. were married between the ages of 21 and 23, varying from 18 to possibly 40 years. Few persons, either men or women, pass the 25-year line before marriage.[64] Of the above number of brides, 94.2 per cent. were married under 25 years of age, and of the grooms, 88.5 per cent. Distributed among five-year periods, these marriages occurred as follows:

TABLE XIV. AGE AT MARRIAGE AMONG RUSSIAN GERMAN BRIDES AND GROOMS

Age at Marriage	Brides, Per Cent	Grooms, Per Cent
16–20 years	62.7	5.3
21–25 years	33.9	77.8
26–30 years	1.9	12.4
31–35 years	1.1	3.4
36–40 years	.4	1.1

[62] These facts demonstrate the proposition that it is the lack of luxuries which deter people from marriage, but not the lack of necessities.

[63] *Marriage Records of Lancaster County, Nebraska*, IV–XL (1878–1914). The previous marital condition is noted only since 1909 and it is not always possible to tell whether it is a remarriage unless the title "Mrs." is prefixed. With the grooms there is no opportunity to distinguish, except as one knows the facts from other records, hence the figures may be somewhat higher than they should be.

[64] "In Russia the marriages take place much earlier than in any other country on account of the national customs and the peculiar system of

During the thirty-seven years since their immigration began (1877–1914) the average age for Russian German women was 20.1 years and for the men, 24.9 years. In Massachusetts in 1901 the average age of all brides was 25.8 years and of all grooms 29.2 years.[65]

A change in the marriage age is shown from an analysis of the Russian German weddings of the last twenty years.[66] From

TABLE XV. CHANGE IN MARRIAGE AGE OF RUSSIAN GERMANS IN 1895–1904 AND 1905–1914

Age at Marriage	Brides				Grooms			
	1895–1904		1905–1914		1895–1904		1905–1914	
	Number	Per Cent.	Number	Per Cent.	Number	Per Cent.	Number	Per Cent.
16–20 years	106	61.6	313	65.3	13	7.5	21	4.5
21–25 years	65	38.0	148	30.8	126	73.4	369	78.7
Over 25 years	1	.6	18	3.9	33	19.1	79	16.8

this table it will be seen that more women are marrying at 16–20 years of age than formerly and fewer men; and fewer women are marrying at 21–25 years and more men. The figures for over 25 years are less significant, especially for the men, because it is probable that some of these are remarriages.

The change in the marriage age is accounted for largely by social and economic conditions. With the poorer class of women, the marriage age has fallen; while with the better class, it has

land tenure." Bailey, *Modern Social Conditions*, 153. Of the females, 58 per cent., and of the males, 37.8 per cent., were under the age of twenty years (1872–1880). In Rhode Island for the same period, about 14 per cent. of all persons married were under twenty years of age.

[65] Bailey, *Modern Social Conditions*, 152.

[66] The time covered by the records from 1878 to 1914 falls into three periods: (1) 1878–1891, when there were few Russian German immigrants, and considerable intermarrying because of a disproportion of sexes; (2) 1892–1894, when a large influx of new immigrants raised the marriage rate beyond all normal proportions; and (3) 1895–1914, when an equilibrium of sexes and an ordinary movement of population produced stable conditions.

risen. Both changes are largely due to industry, and the difference in result depends upon the type of service entered. Girls who go into the unskilled industries are thrown with crowds of other irresponsible girls whose thoughts and conversation are largely confined to the "making of dates." They are thrown with men either in their work or on the streets; and with no interest except their daily monotonous grind, they seek excitement in association with them. Soon beyond the control of parents, they marry early either against the latter's consent or with their reluctant approval.

Aside from these facts, the normal tendency would be for the marriage age to rise, for in the German colonies in Russia the two factors of military service and the patriarchal family system tend to push the age downward. There the young men must go to the army at 21, and they are encouraged to marry early and establish a family before the lots are drawn, for if this is not done, from five to nine years' service delays marriage beyond the desired time.[67] It is the feeling of parents that their sons will be steadier, while away from home, if they are married. Besides, it will be a bar to their contracting alliances while off on garrison duty with Polish, Russian, or other foreign women whom to deceive is cruel; but to marry, involves religious complications. The parents of sons are especially anxious to contract marriages for them. The more well-to-do classes reason that they will have to hire help anyway, and that the son's wife will save money to them and be a financial asset to the son. If a male child is born, it will mean one more *dusch* or land share for the family and thus help to compensate for the economic loss to the family of the recruit. The parents of daughters, on the other hand, would resist this tendency if they could, but since there is no way of telling who will be drawn and since the marriage age is much below 21 years, their wishes in the matter count for little. The patriarchal family system places a premium upon marriage by bringing into the family an extra worker without any expense except board and clothes. The teachings of the church have had

[67] This service is now reduced to three years for the army and five for

a potent influence upon the marriage age. Luther taught that "young" marriages were most desirable and recommended from sixteen to eighteen years for girls and seventeen to nineteen years for boys. The Russian Germans have gone little beyond that, since the most of the girls in the colonies marry from seventeen to eighteen and the boys from eighteen to nineteen.

Although the statistics do not clearly show the fact, it is nevertheless true that the marriage age among the Russian German men and women of the higher social class in Lincoln is rising. It invariably ranges from 22 to 25 years of age for the women and often past 30 for the men.[68] This class includes those who go on to the high school and the university, and who defer marriage by reason of the prevailing sentiment of a different environment, or in order to carry out ambitions which have been aroused. The same reasons operate upon those who have learned a trade, as millinery, dressmaking, bookbinding and the like, or upon those who are in business pursuits, as clerking and stenography. Besides, their rise in the social scale narrows their choice of mates, for most of them still prefer to marry within their own nationality (or if not choosing it voluntarily, they respect their parents' wishes in the matter) and the number of Russian Germans who have risen to the same social level is necessarily limited.

The tendency of the parents to discourage marriage because the children are considered an economic asset, is probably more enforced with this class than with their inferiors. The higher standard of living which they have adopted demands the income of the children, and the older ones of the family especially are encouraged to share in assisting the parents to meet expenses. Any discussion of the matter is ended by the very apparent proposition that "if you marry so young, how do you ever expect us to get back what you have cost us"?[69]

[68] The American-born children of Russian German parents show the same class difference in marriage age which the foreign-born exhibit. Those who have moved outside the settlement respond to the community influence and delay marriage; while among those who have remained in the settlement, the marriage age has become still lower.

[69] Several instances are known of young men whose fathers, backed by their legal rights, demanded the services of their sons until the latter

Every people has its "time to marry," and June roses bloom for the Russian German youth in the heart of the winter.[70] In the colonies in Russia the weddings usually begin after the "Kerb," which is the fall holiday celebrating the close of work in the fields and the beginning of the leisure season.[71] It is observed on different dates in the various colonies, during the months of September and October; and is a veritable mating season for the young people. The weddings usually begin the first Tuesday in November and continue until the Advent Season, which opens the fourth Sunday before Christmas.

The favorite time, however, is from the week immediately following Christmas until the beginning of Lent, six weeks before Easter. Economic convenience and ecclesiastical sanction have so crystallized sentiment concerning this marriage season among the German colonists that any breaking away from it is considered a sign of apostasy.[72] In expressing her disapproval of American marriages in general, a pious Russian German woman said "The Americans are like the Russians; they get married just any time."[73]

This marriage season has been observed by the Russian Ger-

were 21 years of age. These young men did not marry until they were 26 or 28 years of age, or until they had worked long enough for themselves to gather sufficient property to marry.

[70] For the marriage season among the Slavs in Pennsylvania, see Roberts, *Anthracite Coal Communities*, 65–66.

[71] This is a survival of an old German custom which was at one time universal and which is still retained in many rural sections of the Empire. Mogk, *Deutsche Sitten und Bracuche*, 11, says: "Wie in alter Zeit finden auch heute noch in vielen laendlichen Gegenden Deutschlands die Hochzeiten im Spaetherbst oder Winter staat. Das ist die Zeit, wo die Jahresarbeit zu ruhen pflegt und die Ernte, die Fruechte der sauern Arbeit, hereingebracht ist."

[72] A wedding in the summer is an unusual occurrence and happens only when the parties are contracting a second marriage or when the ceremony is necessitated by some circumstance, legal or illegal.

[73] As a matter of fact the Russian is more limited than the American in choosing his wedding day, for the festivities may not occur during fast. That eliminates Wednesday and Friday of each week, the Lenten season of seven weeks before Easter, the five weeks following Pentecost, and the

mans with great regularity since their residence in Lincoln, partly because the annual migration to the beetfields has produced industrial seasons similar to those in the old home. A comparison of periods, however, shows an increasing tendency to conform to American customs, by a more even distribution through the months, with a decidedly growing preference for June.

TABLE XVI. NUMBER OF RUSSIAN GERMAN MARRIAGES BY MONTHS, 1900–1914

	1900	1901	1902	1903	1904	Total	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	Total	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	Total	Grand Total
January	4	3	4	7	6	24	4	7	10	14	11	46	6	10	5	5	6	32	102
February	1	6	2	3	2	14	6	11	10	10	9	46	4	8	2	1	4	19	79
March	1	..	1	6	1	9	5	5	4	10	3	27	8	5	3	6	6	28	64
April	1	2	1	1	5	10	3	4	7	8	6	28	1	3	10	10	3	27	65
May	..	..	..	..	2	2	4	3	5	3	2	17	2	3	3	2	2	12	31
June	2	..	3	3	5	13	2	2	4	6	1	15	6	5	11	3	6	31	59
July	1	6	1	2	..	10	1	4	2	1	4	12	3	3	4	6	2	18	40
August	..	2	2	2	2	8	3	2	2	2	1	10	4	6	3	5	4	22	40
September	3	1	1	..	2	7	1	2	5	..	3	11	4	5	4	9	8	30	48
October	..	4	..	1	1	6	2	..	4	2	6	14	5	3	11	4	5	28	48
November	2	3	1	3	3	12	1	2	8	2	5	18	3	5	6	10	5	29	59
December	6	..	3	4	1	14	10	10	6	5	2	33	6	5	3	5	3	22	69

The percentage of marriages occurring in November, December, January, and February has decreased during the three five-year periods from 49.9 per cent. to 48.0 per cent. and 34.2 per cent., respectively, while the proportion and actual number of June marriages have doubled in the last two decades.

This change in the marriage season is an evidence of assimilation, as is also any tendency to intermarriage. The German colonists in Russia have been decidedly endogamous in their alliances, intermarriage being very uncommon except among the highest classes. This is chiefly due to religious differences, and to the fact that according to the Russian law, the issue of mixed marriages must be enrolled in the Orthodox church.[74] So strongly is this principle engrained into their nature that the older

[74] The law of April 16, 1905, gave permission to all persons over eighteen to change their church affiliation. In 1907 the age was raised to twenty-one, but the red tape connected with the process is so great that few take advantage of it and it remains an effective check upon intermarriage.

people especially manifest decided disapproval of marriages outside their own group.[75] Not infrequently parents bring such pressure upon a young man or woman as to induce them to give up a proposed union with a foreigner. "People ought to marry the same," they say, "then they can raise their children alike," meaning that common religious training is necessary to insure the proper rearing of offspring. Those who are more liberal in their views concerning intermarriage in general, unanimously draw the line at the "Irish"; and since this term to them is synonymous with Catholic, the opposition really rests as before upon a religious basis.

Another and more reasonable ground for opposing mixed marriages is the unfortunate outcome of so many of them. Those of the lower social class in America who contract such alliances almost invariably marry persons who are inferior in character to themselves. Girls who work in hotels or restaurants marry men who are cooks and dishwashers or ticket sellers for cheap theaters. In a year or two, their home is broken up, the American husband deserting his wife and child entirely, or the American woman, as the case may be, frequenting the public dance halls and entertaining "strangers" to the ruin of her husband's purse and the neglect of all her wifely duties. A young girl who married an American dishwasher in the Chinese restaurant where she had worked, and who by her conduct had lost caste in the settlement, thus opened her heart to a pedestrian who helped her wheel her baby across the viaduct, one violently windy Sunday: "I'm going up to the county jail to see my husband. He sent word for me to bring the baby up for him to see. It's now over a year old and he has never seen it, for he left me four months before it was born. I know what he really wants me for, though. He wants me to get him out of jail but I'm not going to. He has left

[75] A correspondent in the *Dakota Freie Presse*, September 10, 1912, writes that one of his townsmen has married a Russian lady who taught in the Zemstvo school in their village and that the marriage ceremony was performed by the Russian priest in Saratow: "Sie ist die erste Russin, welche hier in Kukkus Einzug gehalten hat. Die alten Deutschen schuet-

me twice now and he can just stay where he is until he gets ready to support me and the baby.[76] O, I felt so *ashamed* when folks asked me where my husband was and I didn't know." Such unfortunate experiences as this have not been infrequent, and the divorce court has played so prominent a part in the intermarriages of the lower class that all such are looked upon with suspicion and doubt. The current opinion upon the subject is expressed by a newspaper correspondent who urges the young people to "marry industriously" but warns the young men "not to remain sitting by an English lady, for with them marriage does not usually last long." The correspondent "knows several good German Russian boys who made that mistake and were separated within three months. That is the way in America, if young folks do not get proper instruction."[77]

The rate of intermarriage has varied greatly during different periods on account of local conditions, but under normal circumstances it is on the increase.

TABLE XVII. NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF INTERMARRIAGES BY RUSSIAN GERMANS IN PERIODS FROM 1878 TO 1914

	Marriages	Intermarriages	
		Number	Per Cent.
1878–1891	27	13	48.1
1892–1894	66	8	12.1
1895–1904	198	24	12.1
1905–1914	572	89	15.5
	863	134	15.5

The average number of mixed marriages during the entire period has been 15.5 per cent., varying from 48.1 to 12.1. The extremely high rate during the first period is due to the fact previously mentioned that many of the first immigrants were young single men who had been brought or sent by their families to

[76] The Nebraska law against wife desertion, passed in 1903, provides for imprisonment in the penitentiary for not over one year or in the county jail for not over six months, for a husband who abandons his wife or refuses to support her. *Revised Statutes of Nebraska*, 1913, Secs. 8614–8617.

[77] *Dakota Freie Presse*, January 28, 1913.

America to keep them from military service. There were few available young women of their own nationality, and this inequality of the sexes led to intermarriage, chiefly with Empire Germans. When the immigration of the nineties provided a supply of women, the percentage of mixed marriages dropped to 12.1. During the last twenty years of more normal conditions, it has risen from 12.1 in the first decade to 15.5 in the second decade—a sign of the growing assimilation of the people.

More Russian German women marry outside their nationality than men, a total of 73 women and 61 men having contracted mixed marriages. The excess of women is the more striking when one recalls that in the first period, nine tenths of the intermarriages were of Russian German men; while in the year 1908, nine tenths were of Russian German women. The occupations which are followed account in part for the greater independence of the men. The foreign women are thrown with native men in industry more than the Russian German men are thrown with native women, and this contact sometimes results, as has been seen, in intermarriage.[78]

The marriage licenses issued in Lancaster county, show the birthplace of those intermarrying Russian Germans to be as follows:

TABLE XVIII. BIRTHPLACE OF THOSE INTERMARRYING WITH RUSSIAN GERMANS, 1878–1914

Birthplace	Brides	Grooms
United States	39	54
Germany	17	16
Hungary	2	1
Denmark	1	
England		1
Italy		1
Russia (Slav)	1	
Unknown	1	
Total	61	73

[78] But in European countries it is also true that native women are much more likely to marry outside their group than are foreign men. Bailey, *Modern Social Conditions*, 105; Mayo-Smith, *Statistics and Sociology*,

Of the foreign-born, Germany has the far greater proportion, but this is partly true because the largest foreign group in Lincoln outside the Russian Germans is the Empire Germans. Some of the native-born are also of German parentage while others are of Irish, English, Scotch, and Bohemian stock. The largest proportion of them, however, are probably American.

The native-born Russian German who has been reared in the settlements in Lincoln shows the same general tendency of the foreign-born to marry within his own nationality; while those who have been reared outside this group, almost without exception contract mixed alliances. Out of 53 native-born Russian German women, 23 married foreign-born Russian Germans, 4 married native-born Russian Germans, and 26 married Americans. The same proportion appears for 34 native-born Russian German men, 12 of whom married foreign-born and 5, native-born Russian Germans, and 17 married Americans. So long, then, as the Russian Germans remain within the settlement, they show only a slight tendency to intermarry, even though they may be American born; but when they move outside their group, they are more and more inclined to mixed marriages, an increasing evidence of their assimilation.

It has been pointed out how little the German colonists in Russia have intermarried, even outside their own village. In view of this endogamy, their attitude toward the marriage of blood relatives is of especial importance. Since marriage is an ecclesiastical institution in Russia, each religious group retains its peculiar customs and laws. For the Greek Orthodox and the German Catholics, the marriage of cousins is forbidden; while the Evangelical Germans permit it.[79] Among the wealthy Protestant colonists, the marriage of cousins-german very often occurs, in order to keep the property within the family or within the same social circle. But popular sentiment among the common people strongly opposes such unions, although the children of step-brothers or sisters commonly marry.

[79] For a discussion of this subject at various periods and among different peoples, cf. Howard, *A History of Matrimonial Institutions*, index under "Forbidden degrees."

When the Russian Germans first came to Nebraska, immigrants not infrequently married their cousins in order to avoid the greater calamity of marrying outside their nationality. But relatives always compare the children of these unions with others, and blame any physical defect upon this relationship. However, in spite of a generally strong feeling against consanguineous unions, the marriage of cousins today is a rather common occurrence with the Russian Germans in Lincoln, although since 1905 it is contrary to the law of the state of Nebraska.[80]

These alliances occur among persons of every social class. A young woman of exceptionally good family, native-born, recently wished to marry her cousin, whose brother, a few years previously, had married her sister. The parents refused their consent on the ground of the relationship, but the couple decided to marry in spite of the parents' wishes. It used to be customary, when the Nebraska statute forbade divorced couples to marry within six months, for such persons to evade the law by going to Council Bluffs, Iowa, and getting married at once. Laboring under the impression that the law against consanguineous marriages might be evaded in the same way, this couple took a witness and went to Council Bluffs to have the ceremony performed. But Iowa also forbids such marriages, and since the family names of the contracting parties were identical, the clerk suspected an illegal case and refused a license. However, the parties and their witness swore that they were not related and the clerk finally issued the license and the ceremony was performed.

In another case shortly previous to the one related above, a girl seventeen years old was sent a ticket by an aunt and uncle; and when she arrived from Russia, she was summarily married off to their son, her cousin, the matter of age and relationship both being arbitrarily adjusted to suit the Nebraska law.[81] No objections

[80] *Laws of Nebraska*, 1905, 449; *Compiled Statutes of Nebraska*, 1905, 1058, Chapter 52, section 3.

[81] The age of consent in Nebraska is twenty-one for males and eighteen for females; the age of parental consent is eighteen for males and sixteen for females. Cf. Howard, *A History of Matrimonial Institutions*, II, 471–473.

have ever been raised to any of these cases, and the people will go on with the practice until it is challenged in the courts.

Remarriage is the almost universal rule among the Russian Germans and the proportion of second marriages (and sometimes third) is very large. As has been seen, few persons are found living alone or unmarried, and the ages of widows on remarriage range from 20 to 60, and of widowers from 24 to 61. Except with young people who marry single persons, remarriage always means the union of two or more families and the rearing of another, so that some excessively large families are formed in this way. Financial considerations do not prove a deterring element in these alliances for one or both of the parties may be very poor. Moreover, it is considered that the large number of children acquired will prove an asset instead of a liability. It is customary in Lincoln for a man to dispose of his dead wife's belongings to the neighbors for a financial consideration, since his new spouse will bring him the same things in her dowry. Some enterprising widowers several years ago saw the possibility of realizing a larger sum from these effects by a Sunday afternoon auction and at the same time providing a social function for their friends. This method of disposal, however, is not general, but is an example of mongrel customs which arise from a combination of American and foreign manners.

V. *Divorce*

Among the German colonists in Russia divorce is an almost unheard-of thing. Although the right of separation exists, the disapproval of public opinion, the authority of religion, and the difficulty and expense connected with securing a divorce make it a rare occurrence. The only ground for it in Russia is the scriptural cause of adultery; and since women are taught to believe that they must submit to their husbands in all things, they are practically denied the right of divorce, though they may have abundant cause for action. Since marriage is an ecclesiastical institution in Russia, divorce must be obtained through the church authorities. The parties must present their case to the pastor,

who draws up a petition to the Consistory of the Lutheran church (in case they are Protestant Germans). This is then sent to the Holy Synod of the Orthodox church which canvasses the matter and returns its answer through the Lutheran Consistory to the pastor. Local inquiry failed to find anyone who knew exactly by what ceremony or formula a divorce was granted, so unfamiliar are the people with the phenomenon. But tradition says it occurs as follows: the couple appear before the pastor who says to them "God does not divorce; the devil does." He then commands them to join hands as they had done at the wedding ceremony and separates them as a sign of their divorce. The law permits remarriage after a certain period, but public sentiment is so strongly against the divorced woman that it is seldom she can remarry even if she be the innocent party.[82] In their attitude toward divorce, as toward the position of women in the family, the Russian Germans seem to have been influenced by Russian sentiment more than by the lenient attitude of Luther.[83]

The divorce rate based upon the population given in the Census of 1910, was 3.7 per 1,000 the total population for Lancaster county, while the rate for the Russian Germans was .4 per 1,000. The proportion of divorces to the number of marriages can be more accurately stated.

TABLE XIX. NUMBER OF MARRIAGES TO ONE DIVORCE FOR LANCASTER COUNTY AND FOR THE RUSSIAN GERMANS, 1909–1914

Year	Lancaster County	Russian German
1909	3.8	17.6
1910	3.5	26.0
1911	3.5	20.3
1912	3.8	8.1
1913	3.3	13.2
1914	4.6	12.8

[82] Divorce is more rare among the higher classes than among the lower, on account of the stigma attaching to it.

[83] For the Protestant doctrine of divorce which was largely shaped by Luther, cf. Howard, *A History of Matrimonial Institutions*, II, 60 ff. For marriage and divorce in Russia, cf. Leroy Beaulieu, *Empire of the Tsars and the Russians*, II, 291 ff.

The divorce rate for Lancaster county is abnormally high as, it will be recalled, its marriage rate was. The same cause accounts for both, *i. e.*, the number of out-of-town cases which come to the capital city. Hence, the rate itself is not significant but only the fact that it is comparatively stable, changing but little in the period covered. The rate of divorce among the Russian Germans, on the other hand, varies much more, partly because their population has not been so constant, and partly because more change is actually taking place among these foreigners than among the native people of the community.

The divorce records of Lancaster county for the past fifteen years show the following facts concerning the Russian Germans:[85]

TABLE XX. DIVORCES GRANTED TO RUSSIAN GERMANS IN LANCASTER COUNTY, WITH PARTIAL DATA RELATING THERETO, FROM 1900 TO 1914, INCLUSIVE

Case Number	Date	Plaintiff	Defendant	Number Marriage	Years Married	Place Married	Alleged Ground	Alimony Granted	Suit Contested	Children Affected	Nature of Decree
1	1901	Husband	Wife	1	3	Russia	Adultery		No	0	Divorce
2	1904	Husband	Wife	1	5	Nebraska	Marriage obtained by fraud		Yes	1	Dismissal
3	1905	Wife	Husband		15	Russia	Cruelty, non-support adultery	No	No	0	Divorce
4	1905	Husband	Wife	1	1 9/12	Lincoln	Marriage obtained by fraud, cruelty		No	0	Divorce for cruelty
5	1905	Husband	Wife	2	1 8/12	Nebraska	Cruelty		No	0	Divorce
6	1906	Husband	Wife	1	3	Lincoln	Cruelty		No	1	Dismissal
7	1907	Husband	Wife	1	1 8/12	Lincoln	Cruelty		No	0	Dismissal
8	1908	Husband	Wife	1	10	Russia	Desertion, adultery		No	1	Divorce, custody of child
9	1908	Wife	Husband	1	1 6/12	Lincoln	Cruelty	Yes	Yes	0	Divorce, maiden name
10	1909	Wife	Husband	1	1	Kansas	Marriage obtained by fraud	No	Yes	0	Annulment
11	1909	Husband	Wife	1	3	Lincoln	Desertion		No	0	Divorce

[85] For the records previous to 1909, cf. files of the *Equity Docket of the District Court of Lancaster County*. For the years 1909–1913, cf. Nebraska State Board of Health, *Divorce Records*.

Number	Date	Plaintiff	Defendant	Number Marriage	Years Married	Place Married	Alleged Ground	Alimony Granted	Suit Contested	Children Affected	Nature of Dec
2	1909	Wife	Husband	1	1	Lincoln	Non-support	No	No	1	Divorce, cust of child
3	1910	Wife	Husband	1	1	Lincoln	Cruelty, non-support	No	No	1	Divorce, cust of child
4	1910	Husband	Wife	2	1/2	Colorado	Cruelty		No	0	Divorce
5	1911	Husband	Wife	1	1/2	Council Bluffs, Ia.	Minority of plaintiff, mar. obt. by fraud		Yes	0	Annulment, maiden name
6	1911	Husband	Wife	2	1	Lincoln	Cruelty		No	0	Divorce
7	1911	Wife	Husband	1	3	Lincoln	Non-support	No	No	1	Divorce, cust of child
8	1912	Wife	Husband		6	Council Bluffs	Cruelty, non-support	Yes	Yes	0	Dismissal
9	1912	Husband	Wife	1	5	Nebraska	Cruelty		Yes	2	Dismissal
0	1912	Wife	Husband	1	24	Russia	Non-support drunkenness cruelty	Yes	No	1	Divorce, cust of child
1	1912	Wife	Husband	1	1	Lincoln	Cruelty, non-support		No	0	Divorce
2	1912	Wife	Husband	1	1	Lincoln	Cruelty	No	Yes	0	Divorce, maiden name
3	1912	Husband	Wife	1	20	Lincoln	Cruelty	Yes	Yes	3	Divorce, cust of children ar alimony to d
4	1912	Wife	Husband	1	3	Lincoln	Cruelty, non-support		No	0	Divorce
5	1912	Wife	Husband	1	26	Russia	Cruelty, non-support drunkenness		No	6	Dismissal
6	1913	Wife[84]	Husband		7	C. Bluffs	Cruelty	Yes	Yes	0	Divorce
7	1913	Wife	Husband	1	1	Lincoln	Cruelty		Yes	1	Dismissal
8	1913	Husband	Wife	2	1	Nebraska	Cruelty		Yes	0	Divorce and maiden name defendant
9	1913	Wife	Husband	2	13	C. Bluffs	Non-support cruelty		Yes	0	Divorce, part tion of prope
0	1913	Wife	Husband		7		Cruelty	Yes	Yes	2	Divorce, cust of child
1	1914	Wife	Husband		4	Russia	Non-support cruelty		No	0	Divorce, mai name
2	1914	Wife	Husband	1	1	Lincoln	Cruelty	Yes	No	1	Dismissal
3	1914	Husband	Wife	1	2	Lincoln	Abandonment and cruelty		No	0	Divorce
4	1914	Husband	Wife	1	10	Russia	Cruelty		Yes	2	Divorce to d tendant

lation which they form. In the past fifteen years, 34 suits have been filed in Lancaster county, an average of a little over 2 suits per year. The average number of divorces for the county at large in the five years, 1909–1913, has been 240 annually,[86] during which period the Russian German has averaged 4.2 divorces while comprising about one twelfth of the population. In other words, if the Russian German had secured divorces in the same proportion as the population of the county in general, he would have averaged 20 divorces per year instead of 4.2.

In spite of the comparatively low divorce rate among the Russian Germans, one of their number on being told that there had been 34 cases in 15 years, expressed the general sentiment of the community by saying: "Well, that's just 33 too many." Another man, educated in a Russian college and much influenced by the writings of Tolstoi, expressed the belief that, even with the evils connected with American divorce, conditions were vastly preferable to those in Russia where an exceedingly low rate is maintained. It is his belief that families in America, on the whole, are happier and that family morals are purer.

A number of interesting facts may be noted from the above table. One is the increased number of cases in which the wife appears as plaintiff. In the first 17 instances, the husband filed the original suit in 11 cases and the wife in 6; in the last 17, the wife filed in 12 cases and the husband in 5. This is a measure of the growing independence and individualization of the Russian German woman, and of her realization that public sentiment does not force her to suffer—indeed does not approve of her suffering —at the hands of a really cruel husband. Several of these suits have been directed by American women who have employed these foreign women, usually in the capacity of home laundresses. As a rule these cases are marriages of long standing, usually contracted in Russia, and involving several minor children. Others, however, are young Russian German girls lacking in stability, who feel that they are demonstrating their degree of Americanization by their promptness in rushing into the divorce court.

A second noticeable fact is the small number of children in-

[86] Nebraska State Board of Health, *Divorce Records*.

volved in these divorce suits. In 21 cases there were no children by the marriage; in 8 cases there was only 1 child affected;[87] and in 5 cases there were from 2 to 6 children. In six out of a total of eight cases dismissed by the plaintiff, from one to six children were involved in each, while in the 5 suits between persons of second marriage, there had been no children. These facts point very definitely to the conclusion that children are a decidedly binding factor in the family life of the Russian German; and although no general statistics are at hand, it is very probable that the presence of children is a much greater preventive of divorce in the Russian German than in the American family.

The proportionate number of divorce suits filed and then dismissed by the Russian German is more than twice as large as for the state as a whole. In 1911 and 1912, 9.4 per cent. of all divorce suits filed in Nebraska were dismissed by the plaintiffs, while the Russian Germans in Lincoln dismissed 21.5 per cent.[88] This shows their deep-seated, instinctive aversion to divorce and their willingness to withdraw under the persuasions of relatives, friends, or minister. It is also suggestive of their readiness to use the divorce court as a weapon with which to bring a recalcitrant spouse to terms, and of their litigious tendency elsewhere mentioned.[89] There seems to be no difference in this regard between men and women for in these 8 dismissals, 4 plaintiffs have been men and 4, women.

The proportion of divorces among Russian Germans who have intermarried with other nationalities is less than is generally supposed, particularly by the Russian Germans themselves. In the last fifteen years (1900–1914) there has been one intermarriage for every 6.99 marriages among the Russian Germans; while there has been one divorce among the intermarried for every 5.66 divorces. Contrary to expectation also, the Russian German has

[87] In one of these cases there were three adult children beside the one minor child affected.

[88] While large numbers are here compared with small ones, it is probable that it is a fair comparison between the Russian German and the native population.

[89] Cf. Bauer, *Geschichte der deutschen Ansiedler an der Wolga*, 109 ff.

been the plaintiff in five out of the six divorce suits of intermarried couples.

A fact which does not appear from the table is that in many of the marriages culminating in divorce, the ceremony was performed by a civil officer instead of an ecclesiastic. This includes all the marriages listed in the table as performed in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and some of those solemnized in Lincoln. There is always something irregular about the civil ceremony among the Russian Germans because church control of the institution is so grounded in them that resort to a civil ceremony is considered a disgrace, and usually denotes such in fact. In Russia, forced marriages are as binding as the others, but in America escape is often sought later through the divorce court.

The years of marriage for the Russian German divorcees are, as for the American, chiefly short. Almost one half the total

TABLE XXI. DURATION OF MARRIAGE BEFORE DIVORCE AMONG THE RUSSIAN GERMANS, 1900–1914

Duration of Marriage	Number of Divorces	Duration of Marriage	Number of Divorces
Less than one year	6	7 years	2
1 year	9	10 years	2
2 years	1	13 years	1
3 years	5	15 years	1
4 years	1	20 years	1
5 years	2	24 years	1
6 years	1	26 years	1

number of divorces (15) were granted to persons who had been married less than two years; while 22 couples out of 34 were married less than 5 years.

The alleged ground for divorce among the Russian Germans is usually, as with divorce in general, cruelty. In 25 out of the 34 cases, cruelty is one of the grounds given and in 14 cases it is the sole allegation; while non-support enters into 11 cases. As a matter of fact, it is impossible to tell from the alleged ground what was the real cause for action; for cruelty, in divorce petitions, covers a multitude of sins. In more cases than with Americans, however, it means physical cruelty, such as wife-beating. In 3 cases, adultery is an alleged ground; in 2 cases,

desertion; and in 2 cases, drunkenness. In 4 cases annullment is prayed because the marriage was obtained by fraud, three of the plaintiffs being husbands and one a wife.

Several of these cases disclose peculiar customs which obtain among the Russian Germans. In one instance the husband claimed he had been cajoled into marriage by the defendant, reinforced by her minister who threatened dire spiritual consequences if he did not marry the young woman, not on account of any illegal relations sustained but just on general principles. As the matter was purely one of overpersuading an unwilling suitor and involved no criminal action, the court disregarded this petition but granted a divorce on the charge of cruelty.[90] In another case, the plaintiff was accused of being the father of the defendant's unborn child, and on threat of prosecution went to Council Bluffs and falsified his age in order to secure a license. After marriage the wife confessed to having defrauded the plaintiff, and two months later he sued for a divorce on the ground of his minority and of fraud in obtaining marriage. This case is typical of a certain small class of marriages where the parties commit perjury in order to carry out their plans, and the clerk's office has no recourse on account of the characteristic American carelessness concerning birth data. A people accustomed to the most elaborate and detailed system of records such as Russia employs, come to America, and, if the end in view demands it, falsify concerning such data with the happy consciousness that nothing will come of it.

Another divorce petition throws an interesting side light upon Russian German customs. A young man in a neighboring state sent a ticket to a young woman in Russia in order that she might come to America to marry him. When the ticket arrived the young woman was married to another, and it was decided that a

[90] The petition for divorce filed in this case is an interesting commentary on the superstition of a simple-minded young foreigner, and of the manner in which matters relating to marriage among the Russian Germans are referred to the minister for final adjudication. The prompt appeal to the divorce court is also suggestive of how quickly the hope of escape through the civil authorities overcomes the victim's fear of spiritual penalties.

certain girl who had relatives in Lincoln and who wished to come to America should use the transportation. Instead of getting off at Lincoln she ignorantly went on to the town called for in the ticket, where she was met by the young man and his relatives who tried to persuade her to marry him. When she objected, they read what they pretended was a letter from her sister in Lincoln saying that she would not take care of her; and, since the girl had expected her relatives to repay the young man for the ticket, she was in great distress. Finally the people gave her liquor, and while she was intoxicated she was married to the young man. The next day her sister arrived from Lincoln and took her to her home, and a year later the marriage was annulled.

Remarriage among divorcees is the general rule with the Russian Germans in Lincoln. There is no disposition for them to remain single, in spite of the ostracism which is practiced against divorced persons among the people in the Lincoln settlements. Tales defaming the character of the divorced person, particularly if it be a woman, soon begin to spread; and though the individuals be entirely innocent, neighborhood gossip adds the burden of suspicion to their already troubled existence. Girls in factories and laundries have been known to refuse to work beside a divorced Russian German woman of good moral character, giving as their only reason, "She's divorced." This attitude of the community tends to hasten marriage among such as are unfortunate enough to be divorced, many of them contracting new alliances at the end of the six months' interlocutory period.[91]

The effect of a new and strange environment upon the attitude of the Russian German toward marriage and divorce is plainly marked. There is a loosening of the ties very largely as a result of the lax marriage laws in our American states. The Russian German has been accustomed to publication of the banns for three weeks preceding the ceremony; but where this formality is not required by law, the way is opened for elopement and clandestine

[91] In December, 1914, a Russian German woman was granted an interlocutory decree in the Lancaster district court and less than a week later was married in Council Bluffs, returning at once to Lincoln, where she has since made her home.

marriages. Civil, in place of ecclesiastical, jurisdiction furnishes another opportunity for moral laxity and those who have overstepped the law avoid the censure and punishment of the church by appealing to the civil authorities for the ceremony.

Ignorance and misunderstanding are the cause for a variety of incidents in which Council Bluffs, Iowa, plays the part of a *Gretna Green* where the marriage laws of Nebraska may be evaded. Every class of irregular marriage is performed there, very often in violation of the laws of both states, and through perjury of the parties. Young people under age who elope, first cousins, those who are forced to marry, and divorcees who have received their interlocutory decrees in Lincoln but a few days previous, all journey to Council Bluffs for their wedding ceremony. While the actual number of these is not large, yet the general feeling exists among the Russian Germans that whoever cannot marry in Lincoln can evade the law by going to Council Bluffs. None of these persons have ever been prosecuted, although they are often plain violators of the law, and the practice will continue so long as the authorities wink at its infringement.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

The basis for the local statistics contained in the preceding chapters (unless otherwise noted) is a *Census of the Russian German Settlements taken March 15 to April 15, 1914.* It had been the desire of the writer ever since beginning this study in 1907 to secure such material, but there were obstacles in the way. Chief among these was the exclusiveness of the people themselves. Unacquainted with such investigations, and suspicious of their purpose, any attempt to secure this information through a house to house canvass by one outside their own number would result in their "shutting up like clams" and refusing any returns. Publicity in the matter would not help, for it would only arouse more questioning, and possibly a concerted resistance to the plan.[1] The people's sense of obedience to the law had led them to give prompt and correct answers to the federal census takers, whose work had been explained through school and pulpit; but the case of a private census was different. There was no pressure which could be brought to bear upon them by law, so appeal must be made through some definite interest by persons in whom they had complete confidence.

Although the writer had enjoyed six years of acquaintance and most cordial relationships with many of the Russian German families of the settlements, it was impossible for her to make the canvass because the people could not be made to understand how one outside their own number could have other than a selfish or

[1] This is in striking contrast to the attitude of the negro population of Lincoln a few years ago, when a study of this people was made by two graduate students of the University of Nebraska. See Marsh and Davies, *Study of the Negro in Lincoln, 1904.* All that was necessary to secure the coöperation of the negroes was an announcement from the pulpits of the various colored churches of the city that investigators would call to secure information, and, without exception, they were received cordially, and obtained answers as nearly correct as the negroes were able to give. Instead of resenting it as an intrusion, the people were pleased at the attention shown them.

sinister motive in spending time, energy, and money in such work. Hence it was deemed best to work through the people themselves, and this was made possible through the kind assistance of Mr. Jacob J. Stroh, who, as immigration agent for many years, was personally acquainted with almost every family in the two settlements. His personal interest, especially in the historical data to be secured, led him to pay particular attention to obtaining accurate returns; and he chose as canvassers men who were not only sufficiently well and favorably known to the people to secure the information desired, but men who would use care in having the answers correct. As a result of his choice, only three families out of about 1,200 who were canvassed refused the information sought, although explanations had to be given in practically every case as to the purpose of the census.

The people were frankly told that Mrs. Williams was writing a history of the Russian Germans, and that the census taken was to be preserved as a record for their children. Guaranteed by the coöperation of the canvasser and Mr. Stroh, this was often sufficient to allay the natural curiosity excited by such a canvass; although questions such as "What is she doing it for?" or "How much money is she getting out of it?" were usually asked. With the more ignorant or more recent immigrants, suspicions were aroused, and the canvassers were asked such questions as "Does it mean more taxes?" "Are they going to take soldiers for the Mexican War?" "Is Russia hunting up soldiers?" (occasioned by the query as to how many years each man had served in the Russian army); and finally, "Is somebody trying to organize a new church?"

The census thus obtained was checked with and supplemented by the school records, the city directory, the naturalization, marriage and divorce, and health records, and by information given by several of the most widely acquainted members of the community. Especial pains were taken to be accurate because the figures handled were so small that slight errors would be much more serious than when dealing with large numbers.

The public records which have been consulted for Chapter II are the *Birth Records of the City of Lincoln,* September–De-